Preserving Family Papers and Photographs

By Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler, National Archives at College Park, MD

TREASURED FAMILY PAPERS AND PHOTOGRAPHS record the events in our own lives as well as the lives of our ancestors. These records can take many forms and include the numerous ways in which official events (such as a graduation or a marriage) are documented as well as the more casual but endearing ways of recording a moment, an activity, or family ties . . . such as a child’s drawing or school photos, concert ticket stubs, a Valentine, or a series of letters sent during wartime.

Editor’s Note: After 30 years of service to the National Archives, we congratulate Mary Lynn on her retirement!
This brief article focuses on preserving family photographs as well as records written or printed on paper. The condition of paper can vary greatly, depending on how it was made (poor-quality newsprint vs. strong paper used for handwritten letters or typescript). Some photographs are inherently stable if they were processed and stored properly (such as traditional black-and-white silver gelatin prints), while the dyes in some color photo prints shift over time. Other factors that affect the condition of paper documents and photographs include how they have been stored and displayed and the ways they have been handled. Regardless of the condition of materials when you acquire them, your goal is to do no harm and to help ensure preservation for future generations. So a few tips:

Storage: Avoid storing paper and photographs in hot attics or damp basements or garages. Materials that are stored in cool and dry conditions will last longest. Damp conditions can encourage the growth of mold and can attract insects and can also cause photographs to stick together. Conditions that are too hot can cause paper and other materials to dry out and become brittle, and damp hot conditions will accelerate the rate of deterioration.

Handling: To avoid causing tears and breaks, handle all paper documents and photographs gently with two hands. Make sure hands are clean (avoid lotions, which can leave stains) . . . and avoid food and drink around your treasured items. Carefully open folded letters and newspapers. Do not back-fold to flatten them (which can cause paper to break at fold-lines)—stop if your efforts seem to be causing damage. Do not mend items with any kind of glue or tape. Do not fold, cut, or trim original documents. Handle photographs by their edges and avoid touching the emulsion (image-bearing surface) with bare hands since fingerprints can cause permanent damage and staining.

Housing: Place paper documents and photographs in good-quality folders, envelopes, and boxes that are large enough to fully enclose and support them. Avoid using acidic cardboard boxes. Polyester sleeves can be used to protect individual documents that are weak or brittle. Large items, such as maps and drawings, should be stored flat if possible. Smaller items, such as letters or diplomas can be stored upright in folders and boxes. Photographic prints can be housed in polyester and polyethylene sleeves; this will prevent fingerprints and also protect photos from one another or adjacent items. To avoid damaging materials with accidental ink marks, use only pencil to write identifying information on folders. When labeling photographic prints, write lightly in pencil in the margin area on the backs of the photos. Long or complex captions should be written on the folder or envelope.

Display and Sharing: Inks, markers, colored papers, watercolors, and color photographs can all fade if overly exposed to light. All types of light will cause damage, with sunlight and fluorescent light being the quickest to cause changes. To protect photographs and paper documents from light damage, store them in the dark and limit long-term display of the original. The best way to avoid damage is to display a copy. Print a digital copy for display purposes, and share scans with other family members. To help ensure that original materials are not damaged during imaging, use a hand-held camera or a scanner with a glass platen that is larger than your items—do not use auto feed. To help ensure long-term access to electronic versions of scanned documents and photos, store files on the hard drive of your computer (not on compact discs) and ensure that back-up copies are kept by other family members.

For additional information on this topic, see: www.archives.gov/preservation.

If you need the services of a paper or photograph conservator to evaluate or treat your items, see the referral service provided by the American Institute for Conservation: www.conservation-us.org/.
Crowdsourcing Historical, Archival, and Genealogical Information with the National Archives History Hub

By Kelly Osborn, National Archives at College Park, MD

History Hub, hosted and managed by the National Archives, is a support community for historians, history enthusiasts, researchers, genealogists, citizen archivists, open government advocates, and archival professionals.

It is a place to ask questions, share information, work together, and to find help based on similar experience and interests. History Hub offers tools such as discussion boards, blogs, and community pages to bring together experts and researchers interested in American history. Think of it as a one-stop shop for crowdsourcing information related to your research subject.

History Hub provides the public a new way of accessing information from diverse sources of expertise. Right now, it is a pilot program that informs how we approach customer service and crowdsourcing across the National Archives. We will apply what we learn to a longer-term solution that can be used by Federal Government agencies and other interested organizations looking to expand public participation. This phase is all about learning best practices, so we want to hear from you.

Check it out, ask a question, answer a question, start a discussion, or try something new to help us all find out how History Hub might be useful to our community. We want to make the final product as useful as possible, and we need your input.

One user posted a question asking where she could find death and burial records for a family member who died in Georgia in the year 1833. The user had been unable to find a documented source for the death of this individual, the wife of a clergyman. Two National Archives staff members offered responses to her question. Claire Kluskens mentioned that since the individual in question died before 1919, it might be difficult to find information on her death, because at that time, there was no statewide death registration. Kluskens discussed other possible ways to find documentation of a death but cautioned that these may be difficult to come by. Ann Abney also responded to the question with some information she had found through the website FindAGrave.com. She even found a book that discussed the family’s history. Additionally, another History Hub user came across the post and responded that she had information about the family because the last name was also associated with her own genealogical roots! Through collaboration, a History Hub user was able to obtain information on her family history that otherwise near impossible to find.

History Hub is useful for U.S. historical and archival questions, ranging from how to teach history as an educator or librarian to research questions on anything from military history to African American related records.

Visit us now at historyhub.archives.gov. Ask or answer a question, share your successes or roadblocks, and let us know what you think on History Hub or by emailing us at historyhub@nara.gov!
TWO NEW RECORD SERIES FROM THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES are now available online through the National Archives Catalog at www.archives.gov/research/catalog. The records are the Electronic Dockets for Closed Original Jurisdiction Cases, 1996–2009, and the Electronic Dockets for Closed Appellate Cases, 1996–2006. The Supreme Court maintained these records in electronic format in the Automated Docket System starting in 1996. The dates reflect the term year when the docket closed, but events associated with the cases might date earlier. These records are available in HTM language file format and are online because of the work done by National Archives staff from the Electronic Records Division.

Electronic Dockets for Closed Original Jurisdiction Cases, 1996-2009
The Electronic Dockets for Closed Original Jurisdiction Cases series consists of data documenting original jurisdiction cases heard by the Supreme Court of the United States. Each of the 29 HTM files contains a single docket closed between 1996 and 2001, but events associated with the cases date as early as 1929. There are also three data files that form a relational database covering over 1,100 dockets. The closed dates of the dockets in the data files range from 2001 to 2006. The files are located at https://catalog.archives.gov/id/4319782.

Electronic Dockets for Closed Appellate Cases, 1996–2006
The Electronic Dockets for Closed Appellate Cases series consist of data documenting appellate jurisdiction petitions files with the Supreme Court of the United States. There are 47,639 closed dockets from 1996 to 2002 saved as individual HTM files. In addition, 15 data files covering the period 2002–2006 include data for over 170,000 closed dockets. As with the Closed Original Jurisdiction Cases, three data files for each year form a relational database for each individual year. The files are located at https://catalog.archives.gov/id/4325222.

One of the notable appellate cases included in the Electronic Dockets for Closed Appellate Cases series is Docket 97-1374, William J. Clinton, President of the United States, et al., Appellants v. City of New York, President William J. Clinton Signing H.R. 2254, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993. NAID 3144716
York, et al., February 20, 1998. In this case, the Court ruled that the Line Item Veto Act of 1996 was unconstitutional. It is located at https://catalog.archives.gov/id/26895164.

A second notable appellate case is Docket 00-949, George W. Bush and Richard Cheney, Petitioners v. Albert Gore, Jr., et al., December 9, 2000.

The Court ruled in this case that the recount of ballots in Florida during the 2000 Presidential election violated the Equal Protection Clause. It is the only court decision to determine the winner of a U.S Presidential election. It is located at https://catalog.archives.gov/id/26936845.

Learn more about the National Archives Electronic Records at www.archives.gov/research/electronic-records.
TRANSITION OF THE VENDOR REPRODUCTION PROGRAM

By Deborah Lelansky, National Archives at College Park

SINCE 1996 THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION (NARA) has had annual agreements with reproduction vendors who have been given space in the National Archives at College Park (Archives II) to provide reproduction services and products from records in the Still Pictures and Cartographic Branch. As of September 30, the program no longer operates, and all services related to the reproduction of these records are now conducted in the research rooms during normal business hours.

This decision was made for a number of reasons including:

• the activity in the program has consistently decreased to the point where NARA does not believe it is necessary or beneficial to continue to provide reproduction services in this way;
• the evolution and availability of scanning and photographic equipment enables researchers to obtain high-quality copies within the parameters of the research rooms; and
• the holdings security and preservation needs of the records can be monitored more effectively within the research room environment.

As part of the transitioning out of this program, NARA will be reevaluating existing research room rules and making adjustments where possible to allow access to the best available reproduction copy. Research room patrons and off-site reference requesters will be directed to consult with individuals on the professional researcher list for assistance in obtaining reproductions.

For more information, contact Deborah Lelansky at deborah.lelansky@nara.gov.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)—ARCHIVES II RESEARCH ROOM STAFF ANSWERS:

What specifically is changing related to the program?
The dedicated space for vendor reproductions is no longer available. All records to be used for reproductions will be provided through the research rooms. All reproductions will be done within the monitored environment of the research room. We believe this will give NARA the best possible process for ensuring the safe handling and security of the records while providing the access to the records to the highest number of individuals. Former vendors will be permitted to continue to offer their services through the research rooms.

What materials will be available for use in the research room?
Due to preservation concerns, some materials were subject to limited access by the former vendors. This limited access will continue in the research rooms.

Photographic materials available for use in the Still Picture Research Room will be the reference copies in either digital or analog formats. If the reference copy is deemed unsuitable for the desired reproduction, any existing reproduction copy (including negatives and transparencies) may be requested for copying in the research room.

What types of reproductions services will be provided?
The services provided will be determined by the individual professional researcher. NARA will be working with the former vendors to provide space and guidelines to ensure a minimum disruption of current services.

I am not able to travel to NARA to get reproductions. How will I get the products I need? NARA maintains a professional researcher list which details all the individuals available to provide assistance in the research rooms to conduct research and/or obtain reproductions using research room provided or personal equipment.
Can I continue to work with the same vendors I have used in the past?
Yes, if you have an established relationship with a former vendor and they are available to continue to provide their services, you may continue to request reproductions through them. You also have the ability to use the services offered by other professional researchers who are available for research and reproduction assistance. The professional researcher list maintained by NARA provides information on these individuals.

How will this change affect the cost of obtaining reproductions?
Individual professional researchers set the costs for their unique services. The archival handling fee assessed as part of the vendor program will no longer be charged.

What is the turnaround time for professional researchers to get access to records in the research rooms?
NARA provides research room materials five times during the day and researchers are permitted to have two carts of materials (one in use and one on hold) at a time. Pulls are generally completed within one hour of the request time. The amount of materials permitted to be pulled does not differ from what the former vendors were previously permitted to request daily. Photographic negatives and transparencies housed in cold storage will require additional time to acclimate to research room temperatures before being provided.

What is the turnaround time for obtaining reproductions?
The time necessary to obtain reproductions will depend on the workload of the individual professional researcher and the product requested.

What equipment will be available in the research room for reproductions?
Current research room rules permit the use of personal scanners, copying equipment, and cameras with no flash, with the caveat that all equipment must be approved for the specific media type to be used.

In addition, there is fee equipment currently available or planned in each room including the following:
One oversize scanner in the Cartographic Research Room provides basic and enhanced scans per the fee schedule. Other fee products include paper black and white or color copies, and scans to individual media or DVD.
One Epson scanner that permits scans up to 1200 dpi (the industry-accepted standard for photogrammetric scans).
One Kodak Picture Maker.
NARA will provide dark room space in the research room for the current film to film equipment owned by one of the former vendors for a limited period of time. In addition, NARA will be establishing fixed scanning stations in Stills and Cartographic research rooms for fee use. We will also offer a copy board for reproductions of items that won’t fit in the oversize copier.

Does NARA provide storage for equipment?
NARA currently provides a limited number of oversize lockers for equipment storage on a first-come, first-served basis from Monday through Friday. NARA will explore what additional needs there are to provide over-sized lockers. There is space in the aerial viewing room for scanning operations related to digitization partners. NARA is unable to provide long-term storage of privately owned equipment due to space limitations and liability issues.

Will professional researchers be able to handle multiple items simultaneously?
Records handling guidelines require records be used one folder at a time, one item at time. These guidelines have applied to use of records by the former vendors and will continue to be followed as part of the basic records handling guidelines in the research room.

I have used the former vendors in the past to get high resolution scans of textual records. Will I be able to continue to get this type of scan?
If you have used one of the former vendors for this type of service in the past, you may still use them if they offer this service. You are also free to contact individuals from the professional researcher list to get assistance in obtaining scans.
THE CROSSWHITE FAMILY
ESCAPES FROM SLAVERY

By Jeremy M. Farmer, National Archives at Chicago

THE STRUGGLES OF PEOPLE TO ESCAPE SLAVERY, ALONG WITH THE STORIES of those determined to both help and hinder them, are documented in many Federal records. Documents at the National Archives at Chicago reveal the Crosswhite family’s efforts to escape from slavery and the attempts of their previous owner, Francis Giltner, to gain compensation for them.

Adam and Sarah Crosswhite fled from slavery with their four children in 1843. It took nearly four years for agents of their owner, Francis Giltner of Carroll County, KY, to find them. The flight of the escaped Crosswhite family eventually led the agents to the Michigan town of Marshall. In late January 1847, Giltner’s nephew Frances Troutman, his son David Giltner, two other Kentuckians, and the town sheriff broke into the Crosswhite home and attempted to drag them back to Kentucky and slavery. Word of this soon reached neighbors and other townspeople, and a crowd of more than a hundred formed. At the head of this crowd was Charles T. Gorham, a citizen of Marshall and a prominent banker.

An openly staunch abolitionist, Gorham soon took charge of the situation, barring the Kentucky slavery agents from abducting the Crosswhite family. Though Troutman claimed that they were merely attempting to

Adam Crosswhite. (Source: Michigan Historical Center)

bring the Crosswhites in front of a local judge, Gorham and the crowd soon forced the sheriff to arrest the agents of Giltner. While the Crosswhites escaped with their freedom, and the Kentuckians escaped with their safety, Giltner brought a case against many in the community for the cost of the slaves.

In September 1848, numerous witnesses gave statements at Giltner’s home. One of the witnesses was Giltner’s neighbor, Moses T. Hoagland. Most of Hoagland’s testimony concerned placing a value on each member of the Crosswhite family and stated that “slaves that have absconded and become fugitive slaves for 3 or 4 years and have been recaptured and been brought back to their owners, will sell for as much as if they had not been fugitive slaves.” Hoagland went on to say that the Crosswhites would sell for a higher price if sold further away from the Giltner farm. Their reputation as escaped slaves might not follow them far from Kentucky. It was a common threat among slave owners—to those under their bond-age—to sell them south, where there were large cotton plantations with more demanding work.

Also testifying for Giltner was a resident of New Albany, IN, named John Brown (his testimony made it clear that he was not the famous abolitionist). Brown gave detailed assessments on the worth of each of the Crosswhite family. He said that in general, slaves “when reclaimed, be reduced fifty percent below the value of slaves who had never ran away . . . that the reason we consider them of so much less value is that they are considered dangerous to other slaves in enticing them to run away.” Throughout this set of papers, the Crosswhites are merely spoken of in financial terms, concerning profit and loss. The only reference to them as a family is when they had escaped from slavery to stay together, and to say how troublesome they would be if kept together. In the deposition of David Giltner, the son of the slave owner and one of the men who accompanied Troutman to the Crosswhites’ home in Marshall, David told of how he saw Charles T. Gorham come up to Troutman and heard him [Gorham] use expressions to Trout man in opposition to taking the slaves [and] tell Troutman to write his name in Capitol [sic] letters and bear the sheriff to arrest the agents of Giltner. Hoagland went on to tell Troutman to write his name in Capitol [sic] letters and bear the sheriff to arrest the agents of Giltner.
guage Troutman publically informed the crowd by addressing Gorham personally that he was the agent and attorney of Francis Giltner of Carroll County Kentucky and authorized to seize and arrest said Crosswhite family as fugitives from labour and the property of said Giltner. That while Gorham was thus talking many of the crowd seemed to be much excited, and made many threats that the Kentuckians should be tarred and feathered. [I] noticed Gorham more particularly because he seemed to be more popular with the mob than anyone else and he seemed to exert much influence upon them, in getting them to take a firm stand against us he was a fine looking man and spoke fluently.

Adam and Sarah Crosswhite were able to tell their side of the story in October 1848. They gave their depositions in Chatham, Ontario, Canada, where they and their children had lived since escaping Troutman. Hearing his door being broken into that January morning, Adam confronted Troutman and his fellow Kentuckians to see what they wanted. After informing him that they were there to take them to trial, and eventually back to Kentucky, David Giltner tried to make a deal with them, saying that if they gave up the children, then they would leave Adam and Sarah alone. Sarah responded that she would “rather die” than give up her children. By this time, a wagon had been procured to take the Crosswhites away, and the residents of Marshall began to arrive and thus prevent their abduction.

One of the townspeople who came to the Crosswhite farm that morning, Abner Baker, gave his testimony on September 19, 1848. He related his take on events in relation to another Marshall citizen, Oliver Comstock, Jr. “Comstock came up near where I stood and stood between me and Troutman. Some conversation arose between them. I think Dr. Comstock commenced it by asking Mr. Troutman if he was the gentleman who had come to take the Crosswhite family. Troutman answered in the affirmation. Comstock told him that he could not raise moral legal or physical force enough to take that family out of town, and he might as well understand it first as last.” Troutman then requested Comstock’s name, and wrote it down next to Gorham’s. Gorham demanded that Troutman write his down in capital letters, and Comstock made sure that his was taken down completely, that being Oliver Cromwell Comstock, Jr.

Interestingly, both sides pretty much agree on the particulars of that day at the Crosswhite farm. Most of the depositions and testimonies match perfectly. No one denied that they attempted (and succeeded) in preventing the Crosswhites from being returned to bondage. Additionally, there does not seem to be much animosity from either side. It seems like the differences stemmed from their separate beliefs in the institution of slavery, rather than in the actions of those involved. The events sound like they became quite heated at the cabin.
The Crosswhites feared that their freedom was in jeopardy, and those attempting to return them to Kentucky were threatened with humiliation and physical violence. Surprisingly, no one was hurt, and the Crosswhites were able to safely escape through Detroit to Canada, and the Kentuckians were able to return back south.

The results of this case were in articles and stories told later. They recorded that Giltner prevailed and was awarded a monetary amount, which Gorham and his fellow defendants were directed to pay. Many references declare that future United States Senator Zachariah Chandler paid the fines for them, most cited from an 1875 history of Cass County by a Howard S. Rogers. It is also widely reported that this incident directly led to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, though this case was just one of hundreds that probably influenced this divisive act. Charles Gorham eventually helped found the Republican Party, which led to Abraham Lincoln’s Presidency, and after the Civil War served as the Ambassador to the Netherlands and Assistant Secretary of the Interior, before returning to Marshall upon retirement. Adam Crosswhite eventually returned to Marshall, but we do not know if he reconnected with any of the townspeople who stood up to the slavers who tried to pull him and his family back to Kentucky. The Crosswhite cabin no longer stands, but a plaque commemorating the incident rests near the apparent site. The Crosswhites are buried in Marshall’s Oakridge Cemetery, not far from Charles Gorham.

In most courts, fugitive slave cases were not separated out from all of the other cases they heard. If you know a case number or party’s name, then it may be possible to go directly to the case. Otherwise, researchers will need to browse the court dockets to see what cases involve Federal fugitive slave laws. Researchers interested in further research into slavery and the slave trade may want to examine Walter B. Hill’s 2000 article “Living With the Hydra: The Documentary of Slavery and the Slave Trade in Federal Records” published in the National Archives magazine, Prologue.

Unless otherwise noted, all information and images in this article came from Cases #1900–1907; Law Case Files, 1837–1911; U.S. Circuit Court for the Southern (Detroit) Division of the Eastern District of Michigan; Records of District Courts of the United States; Record Group 21; National Archives at Chicago.

Left: Adam Crosswhite deposition given while living in Canada after he and his family had escaped from the slave catchers.
THE JOY OF DISCOVERY
SMOKEY BEAR COMIC BOOKS

By Marene Baker, National Archives at Denver

IN KEEPING WITH OUR AGENCY’S GOAL OF MAKING ACCESS HAPPEN, the National Archives at Denver recently made available two exciting documents from their collection. Archivist Marene Baker discovered full-length comic books featuring Smokey Bear. The two books, titled Smokey the Bear Nature Stories, are part of a series of eight comic books published with Dell Comics.

In the mid-1950s, Dell Comics published 15 percent of the comic books, but the company controlled nearly a third of the national market. Dell Comics emphasized their role as the good comic book and promised parents that the contents of their publications would be wholesome and entertaining for their young audience. This promise attracted big names such as Disney, Hanna Barbara, MGM Studios, and the U.S. Forest Service. It also explains why there was a partnership between the U.S. Forest Service and Dell Comics.

The Smokey the Bear Nature Stories emphasized the mission of the Forest Service by featuring Smokey, his sidekick Little Smokey, and their bumbling friend Specs the Raccoon. The storyline focuses on Smokey’s adventures against the “evil” bad bear, Gimp, and to help protect the forest and wildlife from threats. Articles in the comics covered a “typical day” for forest rangers and facts about animals in the forests, including the California condor, pocket gophers, wild turkeys, and bald eagles. There are also sections on “How To” collect butterflies, build a birdhouse, or collect animal tracks with plaster casts. The comics also underscored the successful “Only You Can Prevent Forest Fire” refrain of the Forest Service and subtler forest management policies of the era concerning the removal of beaver dams and control of predatory animals such as mountain lions, wolves, and coyotes.

The comics came from the a newly created series of records that were the culmination of an eight-year project to screen unscheduled Forest Service records held in the Denver Federal Record Center. Some of the boxes had not been touched in over 60 years. Working with Suzanne Isaacs, in the National Archives Digital Access Branch, Baker was able to make the full comics available online—a great discovery that led to making access happen.


Smokey Bear Nature Stories, No. 1214 at catalog.archives.gov/id/28368284

Smokey Bear Nature Stories, No. 1016 at catalog.archives.gov/id/28368284
Tesury Department
Records from the American Civil War — Relocation Project

By Timothy Enas, National Archives at College Park, MD

STAFF AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AT COLLEGE PARK ARE MOVING APPROXIMATELY 525 cubic feet of Treasury Department records related to the American Civil War to the National Archives in Washington, DC. The records being transferred are related to and complement the holdings already located at the National Archives Building. The series include records obtained (and in many cases) captured by Federal forces towards the end of the war. Locating these records with other Civil War material will improve access for researchers.

Treasury Department records transferring to Washington, DC
- Record Group 365: Treasury Department Collection of Confederate Records
- Record Group 366: Records of Civil War Special Agencies of the Treasury Department

A list of the contents of the series being moved will soon be posted on Archives.gov. Between October 27, 2016 and January 26, 2017, these holdings will not be available for research.
- October 27, 2016 - Closure date for access to these holding at the National Archives at College Park
- January 26, 2017 - Estimated date records will be available for researchers at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC

Please keep in mind that the January 26 date for opening the materials is an estimate. If there is a significant change to this schedule, we will post it in both the College Park and Washington, DC consultation areas. You can also contact us to check the status of the records:

Email: inquire@nara.gov
Web page: www.archives.gov
Letter: National Archives, Washington, DC
700 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20408
Special Media’s Motion Picture Division
Recent Improvements

By Carol Swain, National Archives at College Park, MD

Researchers will benefit from the many recent improvements that staff in Special Media’s Motion Picture Division have recently accomplished as we continue our transition from analog to digital access.

Making Access Happen with Digital File Access

Researchers visiting the Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Branch Research Room, may hear and see a change in the room’s operation. The whirring and clunking sounds, which often emanated from the Umatic (3/4″) and VHS videotape decks, are gradually being replaced. The new sounds are the low-decibel whir of digital bits and bytes.

3,200 Hours of Digital Content Now Available . . . and Growing

The Motion Picture Branch, Audio-Video Preservation Lab, and Motion Picture Preservation Lab have been working together for the last two years to reformat many of our 10,000-plus legacy analog videotape reference copies to digital files. In addition, we have scanned many items from our World War I and II-era films directly from archival film sources. Researchers can now access these new digital files in the research room and through the National Archives Catalog.

At the time of this writing, our staff had created and made accessible over 3 terabytes of data as mp4 video files (digital multimedia container is the most commonly used format to store video and audio). This number represents nearly 14,000 files and over 3,200 hours of content. These numbers will continue to grow as more videotapes are reformatted and as new content is digitized. In the future, we plan to include digital audio files (as mp3 audio files).

Reformatting Obsolete Media — A Research and Business Need

For many years, researchers used Umati and VHS videotapes (as well as film reference and DVD access copies) as their primary method of accessing National Archives film and video holdings. Many of these videotapes, as well as the machines used to play them, are several decades old. Some of the Umatics date back to the mid-1980s—nearly 30 years old! In addition to the normal degradation that occurs with magnetic media, the tapes and playback machines were obsolete due to heavy use and superseded formats (from a commercial standpoint). As a result, many of the tapes became unusable and the playback machines too costly to sustain and repair.

Easier Access to Time-Based Media

One of the challenges of researching and using time-based media (as in film, video, and audio), is just that—time. Screening and duplicating an analog videotape must be done in real-time. Therefore, a 60-minute videotape would take at least 60 minutes to duplicate as a videotape copy. In the digital file world, a digital file representing 60 minutes of content can be copied in under a minute.

Time Better Spent — From Months to Hours

Compared to the previous formats, digital files provide more efficient and easier access to time-based media. Digital allows researchers to devote more time to actually researching. For example, a researcher working eight hours a day, seven days a week, would need well over a year and a half to copy the 3,200 hours of analog media we have digitized to date. Now, copying the same amount of content from digital file sources is accomplished in a matter of days and hours!

Copying the Files On-Site

Hard drives are available for self-copying the digital files in the Motion Picture Research Room in College Park, room 4000, during regular hours of Monday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Researchers may bring their own blank media to copy the files. Blank media can include flash or thumb drives, PC-formatted external higher capacity hard drives, or blank DVDs. If you bring your own blank media, it is free to copy. DVDs are available for purchase from the National Archives for a charge of $2 each. The size of a digital file typically averages 250 megabytes. Research room staff can provide guidance and assistance.

Remote Access to the Files

Many of these files have been, and will continue and to be, uploaded to the National Archives Catalog, and we are also exploring as many additional ways as possible to make the files available online so that they would be accessible via the web from any location, at any time.

Tell Us What You Think

Questions or comments? Please write to us at mopix@nara.gov.
FRED FIELDING, WHO SERVED AS WHITE HOUSE COUNSEL FOR PRESIDENTS
Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush, and seven fellows conducted research at the George W. Bush Presidential Library on April 1 this year. The fellows attend the Fielding Center for Presidential Leadership Study, which is part of Gettysburg College’s Eisenhower Institute. The Fielding Center “promotes the study and analysis of Presidential leadership for undergraduates and emphasizes the value of governmental service and civic engagement.”

Having previously conducted research at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, the fellows eagerly looked forward to working with documents at the George W. Bush Presidential Library. Pursuing a variety of topics, the group researched records opened under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The fellows were especially interested in Fielding’s own records. Although only a handful of folders from Fielding’s Staff Member Office Files have been processed under a few individual FOIA requests, the group was excited to identify documents written by Fielding located among the records. These included both of the formal letters from Fielding to George W. Bush recommending John G. Roberts and Samuel A. Alito as nominees to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court.

After they had concluded their research, the fellows engaged in a lively discussion with Fielding about the documents they found; what the documents revealed in content, style, and formatting both individually and collectively; and how the documents could be interpreted and what conclusions could be drawn. For example, reviewing the content of court nomination documents led to questions and answers about the nomination processes. In addition, examining the documents’ style and format led to an understanding about the purpose of records management practices in the White House. Using the library’s records with Fielding’s first-hand knowledge allowed the fellows to learn more about the inner workings of the White House, appreciate the historical importance of Presidential Libraries’ records, and better understand the research value of the documents themselves. The archival staff who assisted the fellows—Tally Fugate, Sarah Quick, Malisa Culpepper, Elizabeth Lanier, Allen Almodovar, and Shirley Kolling—are now more informed about how to help future researchers. The library looks forward to having future fellows from the Fielding Center conduct research and welcomes all researchers.

LEARN MORE
Use our finding aids to learn more about records open for research at the George W. Bush Presidential Library.

George W. Bush Presidential Library & Museum
2943 SMU Blvd., Dallas, TX 75205 • Phone: 214-346-1650; Fax: 214-346-1699
General Inquiries: gwbush.library@nara.gov • www.georgewbushlibrary.smu.edu/Home.aspx
IT’S ELECTION SEASON AND WHAT BETTER WAY TO CELEBRATE (other than voting of course!) than by combing the historical record for documents related to campaigns. Holdings with relevance to campaign and election history have recently been processed or digitized by the archival staff at the Jimmy Carter Library for greater obtainability. This most recent information made available at the library uncovers the unique and reoccurring issues that politicians debate when vying for the highest office in our nation.


**JACK WATSON PAPERS OPEN FOR RESEARCH**

Jack Watson’s papers document his early career, the 1976 and 1980 Presidential campaigns, roles held in the White House, and his bid to be the Governor of Georgia in 1981–82. Jack Watson first worked with Jimmy Carter during Carter’s 1970 gubernatorial campaign for the executive office of Georgia. Six years later, Watson was a key figure in the 1976 Carter-Mondale Presidential campaign, serving as the head of the Carter-Mondale Policy Planning Group and Director of the Transition Team. During Carter’s administration, he became the President’s Cabinet Secretary and Chief of Staff. Notable records include position papers written by Watson for the 1976 Presidential campaign, and high-level memoranda between Watson and the President. The Speech Files series is a particularly insightful set of records that include Watson’s annotated speeches given over the course of the 1976 Presidential campaign.

The 1976 Campaign Committee to Elect Jimmy Carter, Issues Office, Noel Sterrett’s Subject Files, is one of the most popular series in our reading room and is now available online! Noel Sterrett authored the National Issues Booklet as part of the Issues Staff specializing in Science and Technology for the 1976 Presidential campaign. The series consists of memorandum discussing campaign strategy, background material on important issues, correspondence from organizations and constituents, and press releases generated by the campaign.

Memo to Noel Sterrett. 1976 Campaign Committee to Elect Jimmy Carter, Issues Office, Noel Sterrett’s Subject Files, Box 92.

Twenty-seven out of the 29 boxes were scanned into Portable Document Format (PDF) files and made “key word” searchable on the Jimmy Carter Library digital library website. The last two boxes, 94 and 95, contain tele-net messages detailing press releases, news stories, and transmission testing messages. They were not scanned due to their physical condition but can be accessed at the library onsite.
RARE 1976 CAMPAIGN PHOTOGRAPHS
RECENTLY DESCRIBED

Jimmy Carter’s 1976 Campaign Audio Visual Files are now described. These files are located in the Carter Family Papers and contain photo prints of the Carters on the campaign trail. Photographs taken by professional photographers, family, and friends give multiple perspectives of President Carter as a candidate during official and candid events. Gerald Rafshoon’s 1976 Campaign Photographs have also been recently described. We recommend advanced notice to access these files. For more information on either of these collections, please contact the Library (contact information at the end of the article).

ONLINE EXHIBIT FEATURE - COMING SOON!

In 2016, our online exhibit on campaign history will soon be available to researchers interested in nostalgic and less academic topics. The Presidential Libraries office is collaborating with the Google Cultural Institute to present an online exhibit featuring campaign memorabilia, ads, and other artifacts from National Archives holdings. The Jimmy Carter Library contributions include campaign paraphernalia replete with peanut and big grin imagery.

Related collections in the process of being made available online include the Mary King Papers and the Betty Rainwater Papers. Library staff anticipate these records will be open for research by October 1, 2016. Collection openings and online finding aids are found at the Jimmy Carter Library website.

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Atlanta, Georgia 30307-1498
Tel: 404-865-7100
Fax: 404-865-7102
www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov
ARCHIVISTS AT THE JOHN F. KENNEDY PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY processed and opened two new collections for research in Spring 2016.

The Edmund A. Gullion Personal Papers opened in March 2016 and document Gullion’s work as a Foreign Service officer in the U.S. Department of State as well as his tenure as Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Some correspondence, clippings, photographs, and speech material pertain to his eventful term as U.S. Ambassador to the Congo (1961–64). For more details, see our blog post about the collection.

The Clarence J. Martin Personal Papers opened in April 2016. Martin was co-chair of the Kennedy for President Committee in Louisiana and was later appointment Director of Congressional Liaison for the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID). The collection includes materials related to the Kennedy for President Committee in Louisiana. See our blog post for more information about this collection.

Digital archivists have also been working on cataloging the popular White House Photographs collection and recently finished describing hundreds of photographs from President John F. Kennedy’s inspection tour of NASA facilities.

These newly digitized photographs document the President’s visit to:
- Alabama’s Redstone Army Airfield and George C. Marshall Flight Center
- Florida’s Cape Canaveral Air Force Station tour
- Houston, TX, visit, including his arrival inspection of the NASA Rich building
- address at Rice University

Learn more about recent openings from our blog, Archivally Speaking.

FIFTY YEARS AGO, THE UNITED STATES WAS RAPIDLY BECOMING MORE MIRED in the tragedy that became known as the Vietnam War. On April 26-28, 2016, the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library & Museum conducted a Vietnam War Summit to provide a retrospective and offer an opportunity to reassess the causes, miscalculations, and even unexpected benefits.

In attendance were many notable speakers and hundreds of participants taking a fresh look, from various vantage points, at this long war that divided the American people. Special guests included a diverse range of prominent personalities, including political figures Henry Kissinger and current Secretary of State and Vietnam veteran John Kerry; entertainers Country Joe McDonald and Peter Yarrow of the band Peter, Paul and Mary; antiwar activist Tom Hayden; scholar Marilyn Young; and journalists Dan Rather and Peter Arnett.

During the summit, documentary filmmaker Ken Burns previewed excerpts from his forthcoming 18-hour, 10-part series on the Vietnam War (premiering in late 2017).

Watch the video and read about the spectacular array of activities at the summit at www.vietnamwarsummit.org.

For decades, the LBJ Library has provided researchers access to some of the most extensive Vietnam records found in the United States. Researchers can begin their exploration using detailed subject guides, prepared by archival staff, on topics including the Gulf of Tonkin, the antiwar movement and dissent, media, and popular support for the war effort. The broadest guide, simply titled “Vietnam—General” refers to the small collection, “Letters from Vietnam Veterans,” consisting of more than 130 pages of personal letters written by soldiers serving in Vietnam to family members and friends at home. These letters were donated to the library in response to a 1989 public solicitation by museum curator Gary Yarrington. In 2002, Barbara Young donated a cache of 54 letters from her former boyfriend, Phil Nelson. When this small trove arrived in 2002, it received national media attention.

As the nation approached its half-century commemorations of the experience in Vietnam, the library began to collect letters documenting eyewitness perspectives of veterans. These personal eyewitness testimonies are in its collection “Letters from Vietnam Veterans” and exhibit “Vietnam: Evidence of War.” The Library of Congress has also spearheaded a program to make available oral histories and reminiscences of veterans from all of America’s many military involvements through its Veterans History Project (available at www.loc.gov/vets/). In addition, their celebrated initiative, StoryCorps, has created a vast online repository of audio and video histories with a large section devoted to veterans, family members, and nonmilitary participants (available at https://storycorps.org/). All of these efforts help the country to reflect, examine, and reconcile its memory of a war—still fresh for many citizens—and to help future generations understand the consequences of pursuing military action.
THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OFFERS THE PUBLIC A NATIONWIDE PROGRAM of genealogical workshops and courses. Topics include an introduction to genealogy and research into records such as census schedules, military service and pension records, and passenger lists.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17
“Help! I’m Stuck” Genealogy Consultation, Washington, DC

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7
Researching American Indians Online, Fort Worth, TX

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22
“Help! I’m Stuck” Genealogy Consultation, Washington, DC

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4
Overview of Military Records at NARA, Fort Worth, TX

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12
“Help! I’m Stuck” Genealogy Consultation, Washington, DC

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2
Preserving Your Family Records, Fort Worth, TX

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10
“Help! I’m Stuck” Genealogy Consultation, Washington, DC

OCTOBER 26 & 27
National Archives Virtual Genealogy Fair

WASHINGOTH, DC PROGRAM
INFORMATION:
www.archives.gov/calendar/know-your-records/

FORT WORTH, TX PROGRAM
INFORMATION:
www.archives.gov/fort-worth/public/workshops.html

Virtual Genealogy Fair

PARTICIPATE IN OUR BIGGEST GENEALOGY EVENT OF THE YEAR! DURING THE TWO DAYS OF INTERNET BROADCASTING, LEARN AND ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT FEDERAL RECORDS AS RESOURCES FOR FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH. SPEAKERS INCLUDE GENEALOGY EXPERTS FROM NATIONAL ARCHIVES FACILITIES ACROSS THE NATION. FROM BEGINNER TO EXPERT, DISCOVER NEW TIPS AND TRICKS—WE HAVE SESSIONS FOR ALL SKILL LEVELS. AFTER THE EVENT, RECORDED SESSIONS AND HANDOUTS WILL REMAIN ONLINE.

CONTACT KNOW YOUR RECORDS STAFF:
National Archives and Records Administration
Research Customer Support
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20408

KYR@nara.gov  |  202.357.5260
Visit us at www.archives.gov/calendar/know-your-records
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Nationwide Network of Archives Facilities

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National Archives at San Francisco, CA
National Archives at Seattle, WA
National Archives at St. Louis, MO

Presidential Libraries and Museums

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Franklin D. Roosevelt Library
Harry S. Truman Library
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library
Lyndon Baines Johnson Library & Museum
Richard Nixon Library
Gerald R. Ford Library
Gerald R. Ford Museum
Jimmy Carter Library
Ronald Reagan Library
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George W. Bush Presidential Library

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National Archives Catalog
Online Research Tools and Ways to Search Online
Microfilm Catalog
Access to Archival Databases (AAD)
Guide to Federal Records

VIDEO ON RESEARCH AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
Learn what to expect when you research at the National Archives. This video addresses how to enter the National Archives building in Washington, DC, what security measures the National Archives uses, what you’re allowed to bring into the research room with you, and how to use the research room and records.
Watch video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HNYhMIXYhU

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NATIONWIDE NETWORK OF ARCHIVES FACILITIES
www.archives.gov/locations

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