



# Pacific Currents

Newsletter of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, American Samoa & Trust Territory of the Pacific  
Facilities and staff in San Bruno, Laguna Niguel, and Riverside, California

[archives.gov/pacific/](http://archives.gov/pacific/)

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## Paper and Electronic!

### NARA issues guidance on “Mixed-Media Files”

NARA has issued guidance to Federal agencies about the records management implications of situations where records on various types of media are intermixed in one file.

By *file* we mean a single file folder, a case file, or a project file containing agency records. By *media*, we mean any kind of physical electronic storage device, such as floppy disks, CD-ROMs, DVDs, memory sticks, thumb drives, digital or analogue tapes, and VHS tapes.

*Mixed media* means an agency file that contains a mixture of paper records (including photographs, maps, drawings) and any of the storage media listed above.

This article is a brief summary. For the full text, be sure to go to <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/bulletins/2011/2011-04.html>.

Staff who maintain a current file consisting of mixed media stored elsewhere in the office (such as on a shared network drive or on a CD-ROM sent by a contractor) generally know where to find the disparate

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### San Bruno open house draws crowd

On September 15, we had an open house in at the NARA San Bruno facility, located 12 miles south of San Francisco. We had large groups representing the Department of Energy (Berkeley and Stanford labs), the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Department of the Interior. Also represented were the U.S. Courts, Veterans’ Affairs, Air Force, Homeland Security, Labor, EPA, IRS, and local government.

**Contact us**  
by going to [archives.gov/pacific/](http://archives.gov/pacific/) then scroll down to “Ways to Reach Us”

### San Bruno marks first anniversary of deadly pipe line explosion and fire

One year ago, a catastrophic fire swept a San Bruno neighborhood, killing nine, injuring many more, and destroying 38 homes. Those directly affected have started to rebuild their homes and lives, but the trauma and grief of this terrible incident will be with us for years to come.

### National Archives to open 1940 Census in 2012

Every 10 years the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) releases a new federal population census from past decades. In April 2012 we will open the 1940 census, covering the Great Depression of the 1930s. This census asked some questions not asked in earlier censuses.

New questions included each person’s residence in 1935, and whether a person was working in one of the public works programs of the New Deal.

Other new questions covered the birthplace of the respondent’s parents, veterans’ service, and

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## 1940 Census is coming

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participation in Social Security and Railroad Retirement, two new national insurance plans. Respondents were also asked about the industries in which they worked and their specific occupations.

For the first time, census-takers listed the name of the person in each home who answered the questions. Knowing who answered the questions may explain why certain questions were answered the way they were. Before the 1940 census, the schedule did not show who gave the information to the census taker.

Although questions about education were asked in earlier censuses, this is the first time the census asked for the highest grade of school completed.

The Census Bureau, interested in national migration, asked everyone where he or she lived on April 1, 1935. The bureau defined *migrants* as those persons who lived in 1935 in a county different from the one in which they were living in 1940. *Immigrants* were defined as people living in the continental United States in 1940 who reported that their place of residence in 1935 was in an outlying territory or possession of the United States, or in a foreign country.

For the first time since 1870, the census did not ask if a person served in the American Civil War. Veterans were asked if they served

in World War I, Spanish-American War, Philippine Insurrection, or Boxer Rebellion and if in a Regular Establishment (Army, Navy, or Marine Corps), peacetime service only, or another war or expedition.

Although Civil War pensions may be considered the first large-scale pension program in the United States, the pensions did not cover all aged people. The Social Security Act, signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt on August 14, 1935, included unemployment insurance, old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, and grants to states to provide various forms of medical care.

Census records are the only records that theoretically describe the entire population of the United States on a particular “day.” The 1940 census is no different. The answers to the new questions—and the old—will tell us, in detail, what the United States looked like on April 1, 1940, and what issues were most relevant to Americans after a decade of economic depression. As with all censuses, the answers to these questions may lead to new avenues of research.

This article was adapted from an article by Constance Potter in Spring Issue of NARA’s magazine, *Prologue*. Ms. Potter is a NARA reference archivist specializing in federal records of genealogical interest held at the National Archives and Records Administration.

## Mixed-media records guidance

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records associated with the file. However, when the file is no longer active, your agency may lose track of the file components and, over time, parts of the file may be lost and/or electronic media may become unreadable.

Most Federal agencies have a policy to print electronic records and include them in the paper files. In practice, some records are not or cannot be printed at all.

In such situations, the physical media that hold the electronic records are often included in the paper files. Agencies also use shared drives to keep together electronic records for each file and may have electronic file-naming conventions or other means to maintain some links with the paper versions of these records.

Agency program staff should work with their records officers to address the records management challenges associated with mixed-media files. The successful management of mixed media depends on appropriate file identification, organization, and retention by agency business units. Processes to manage records are most easily implemented when the records are created.

The NARA guidance identifies specific strategies for managing mixed-media files. Permanent

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## Want ARCIS access but don't have it?

Here's how to get it:

Go to the FRC home page to learn more about ARCIS:  
<http://www.archives.gov/frc/>

Get the ARCIS [sign-up form](http://www.archives.gov/frc/arcis/about.html) at [www.archives.gov/frc/arcis/about.html](http://www.archives.gov/frc/arcis/about.html)

Fill in the form on your screen and save it on your shared drive. Then, email your form as an attachment to your agency's headquarters Records Officer.

Call or e-mail the ARCIS help desk if you don't know who in your agency is the ARCIS-access approver.

Once they receive your approved form from your headquarters, ARCIS will process your request and send you your user ID and password. You will be able to log into ARCIS immediately.

**ARCIS HELP Desk:**  
[arcishelp@nara.gov](mailto:arcishelp@nara.gov) or  
314-801-9300, Monday to  
Friday, 5 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

## Mixed media guidance

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records have additional requirements to ensure both the long-term preservation of records in agency custody and to facilitate the legal transfer of the records to NARA, especially in the case of electronic records. Check with your regional Federal Records Center before sending files containing any electronic media. Not all FRCs can accept electronic media.



## FRC Digital Capture Program

The Riverside Federal Records Center's Digital Imaging staff produces digital copies of temporary records to make customer agency operations more efficient. For more information, contact:

**Susie Bielawski** (951) 956-2060 [susie.bielawski@nara.gov](mailto:susie.bielawski@nara.gov) or  
**Michael Wharrie** (951) 956-2034, [michael.wharrie@nara.gov](mailto:michael.wharrie@nara.gov)

## Certification in Records Management Training classes coming to San Francisco

Next year we are offering the full certification work shops series for the first time in San Francisco. To be held in March and April, 2012, the series includes:

- *Creating and Maintaining Agency Business Information* (March 27-28)
- *Records Scheduling* (March 29-30)
- *Records Schedule Implementation* (April 23-24)
- *Asset and Risk Management* (April 25-26), and
- *Records Management Program Development* (April 27)

For our full records management training workshop schedule for FY 2012, see the flyer insert in this issue.

## RECORDS TRANSFER, REFERENCE, and DIGITAL CAPTURE SERVICES WORKSHOPS

These **FREE** full-day Federal Records Center Program workshops teach you:

- ▶ About our Archives and Records Center Information System (ARCIS)
- ▶ How to transfer non-current records to your Federal Records Center
- ▶ How to make a request for reference services using our on-line Reference Services
- ▶ About our digital-imaging services

### When

October 19, 2011  
November 9, 2011  
December 14, 2011

### Where

Phoenix, AZ  
San Diego, CA  
Riverside, CA

### Information and Registration

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## ***Pacific Currents***

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