ARCHIVES IN ACTION: INVESTIGATING THE MANAGEMENT OF MUSEUM ARCHIVES

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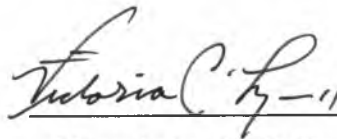by

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CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

I certify that I have read *Archives in Action: Investigating the Management of Museum Archives* by Alyssa Marie Torres, and that in my opinion this work meets the criteria for approving a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree Master of Arts in Museum Studies at San Francisco State University.

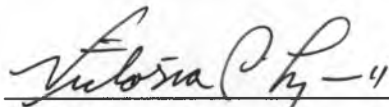Edward Luby, Ph.D.
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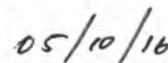# ARCHIVES IN ACTION: INVESTIGATING THE MANAGEMENT OF MUSEUM ARCHIVES

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San Francisco, California
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Museum archives include administrative documents, staff files, and other valuable legacy data that considered together, supply an institutional history for staff, scholars, and the public. In this thesis, the current state of museum archives management in the United States is assessed, as the topic is widely unexamined and well-managed archives are critical to successful museum operations. After a literature review is conducted that explores archival management, best practices, policies, and outlines the important role museum archives play in institutions, the survey results presented highlight how museums accredited by the American Alliance of Museums manage their archives. A discussion of the survey results follows, offering several conclusions and recommendations concerning the future development of museum archives. It is concluded that while museums need to develop professional guidelines, that many collections staff work to manage archives, and that few museum-wide archives policies exist, museums are doing their best to ensure proper archives management.

I certify that the Abstract is a correct representation of the content of this thesis.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Museums preserve, manage, and care for collections for the benefit of the public by following best practices and adhering to ethical codes provided by professional organizations such as the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). In caring for collections, however, museums also produce a collection of their own, generated from administrative paperwork, notes from meetings, paperwork from collections not in current use, exhibition histories, curator notes, and much more. Due to the important institutional history and legacy data they represent, these types of records, grouped together in what is known as a *museum archive*, are often considered to be worthy of collecting, managing, and retaining for the long term.

A museum archive has lasting value because it can be a resource for staff who are conducting research on organizational history as well as for scholars and the public who find that the archive is a necessary component to their research. A well-managed museum archive is the result of a supportive museum administration, guidance from a professional archivist, and the cooperation of a well-informed staff.

Not all museum archives are associated with these important and advanced features, however; in fact, archives can be viewed as secondary or peripheral by museums, compared with information related directly to collections. As a result, in their efforts to manage archives, museums can face challenges such as insufficient budgets, a lack of staff oversight, and an absence of upper-level administrative support. In examining museum archives, key questions include: how are museum archives actually

managed by museums and by whom? What formal or informal practices are in place, and do these practices support access to museum by staff, scholars, and the public?

In this thesis, the current state of museum archives is examined by conducting a literature review and by surveying AAM accredited institutions in the United States. The study of museum archives is a largely unexamined topic. While there is an abundance of information on archives in general, less is known about museum archival practice. As a result, understanding how museums with different needs and requirements are managing their archives is important. Because museum archives are of high value to organizations, obtaining a snapshot of how they are organized and managed in the United States, and the key issues they face, is important.

In the literature review, definitions of archives, basics of preserving, managing, and organizing archives, and best practices in the management of archives are outlined. In the survey, current practice in managing museum archives is examined in order assess how museums are approaching the preservation, organization, and development of policy for museum archives. In particular, the survey highlights the role and value of archives to museums, supplies insight into the challenges museums face in managing their archives, and examines how museums address important standards and practices when budgets are insufficient or other institutional issues are present.

The benefits of a well-organized and maintained archive for museums are numerous, chief among them accessibility to important records for staff and the public, so that an in-house research center on the museum and its institutional history exists.

Despite a growing list of benefits, however, museums are not actively talking about the care of their archives, making this a topic that should be part of the conversation in the museum profession. Unlike object-based collections, archives of all kinds require different types of professional care and management in order to function properly and effectively.

As a result, questions posed in this thesis include, how are museums managing and preserving their archives? What policies are they integrating to best organize and arrange the archival records? What are museums defining as archival material? These questions raise essential points about management, but more importantly, awareness about the current state of museum archives.

Accredited museums uphold best practices, standards, and management of collections to a very high degree, yet such practices do not exist for the management of museum archives. As a result, surveying accredited museums can also provide insight into any emerging best practices in the area of museum archives management. As will be discussed in this thesis, the existing literature on museum archives is mostly derived from the broader, professional archival community and archival organizations. What is lacking in the literature is how museums with different financial means, staff sizes, and staff training levels manage their archives, what specific practices and standards are in place, and what the unique challenges are in the management of archives in a museum context. Furthermore, by surveying accredited museums of all sizes, types, and budgets, this study can highlight the presence of archives in museums.

This thesis begins with a review of the literature on the definition of archives, their necessity, and how they support organizations. The literature review continues with an examination of the recent collaboration between libraries, archives, and museums, and how new partnerships can support best practices to work with collections handling, collections management, and communicating with the public. The literature review concludes with a history of museum archives and their development, their management, practice, and policies, and the work of museum archivists.

Following the literature review, the methods used in this thesis are outlined, including how the literature review was conducted and the process for developing and distributing the survey. The results of the survey are then presented, and several specific responses provided by survey respondents are included. Finally, a discussion of key themes identified in this study are presented, followed by several conclusions about the state of museum archives today, and recommendations to the museum field.

Museum archives offer more than just an organizational system for files, documents, and photographs of the institution's history. Museum archives provide an opportunity to preserve an institution's changing identity and allow staff to revisit the museum's past as they forge the future. Archives offer the opportunity to examine what the founders of the museum wanted for future staff and visitors, to see what was said about a specific object before it was accessioned into the collection, and significantly, to provide a way for museums to engage with scholars, the public, and staff in an accessible and transparent manner.

Chapter 2: Archives

In this chapter, the basics of archives will be examined. By exploring the definition, history and management of archives, the significance of the functions, and operations of archives will be highlighted. First, a definition of archives will be presented in order to best understand the role of archives. Second, the history of archives will be provided to help understand the traditions and cultures within an archive and their development today. Third, the management of archives will be outlined in order to explain the role of the archivist and the importance of the policies, procedures, and guidelines in place for archival best practices. This chapter will conclude with an explanation for the integration of archives into other cultural institutions such as libraries and museums.

Definition

The term *archives* brings to mind visuals of newspaper clippings, handwritten letters of yellowed documents, and old black and white photographs, all housed in an organized, tidy space in file folders and boxes storing more valuable histories. However, as this thesis will demonstrate, archives encompass more than their contents. Gregory S. Hunter offers a more expansive understanding of the term and writes that *archives* can be understood in three ways: *materials*, *place*, or *agency* (Hunter 2003, 2). According to Hunter, as a *material*, traditional archives are "noncurrent records of an organization or institution preserved for their enduring value" (Hunter 2003, 2). As a *place*, Hunter states

that archives are "the building or part of the building where archival materials are located" (Hunter 2003, 2). As an *agency*, Hunter states that archives can be defined as "the program office or agency responsible for identifying, preserving, and making available records of enduring value" (Hunter 2003, 2). In other words, the term *archives* supports a broader understanding of the responsibilities and duties of archives as places for people tasked to manage, arrange, and preserve a collection of non-current records that have historical value to a specific institution or organization.

An archival record can be defined as a unique, one-of-a-kind material that holds significance to a particular history (Hamil 2013, 4). Lois Hamil references the archival educator, James M. O'Toole, who stated, "what makes the records *archives* is neither age nor appearance, but rather content, meaning and usefulness." Archival records can be a variety of materials and can come in different types of formats that provide important institutional histories from different time periods. From reports, diaries, and journals to digital film, hard drives, disks, and photographs, all can be considered archival material and be accessioned into the care and preservation of an archive (Hamil 2013, 4).

Archival records are created from documents or materials that were once in use. When records are no longer active, they may be presented as archival material, if they are deemed to have what Hamil refers to as "permanent historical value" (Hamil 2013, 5). It is in this stage, that such records are examined by professional archivists, record managers, curators, or staff responsible for archival management and apply policies that reflect archival accession requirements and procedures. Once decided what materials are

considered valuable to the archival collection, the materials are moved to archival storage to be preserved (Hamil 2013, 5). Whether it be non-current records reflecting legal, fiscal, administrative, or research material, it is important that the records reflect institutional history that relies on the understanding of the context of the organization.

History of Archives

The concept of archives have been around as long as there have been materials to preserve. Records of different types of media have been preserved and found from great civilizations across the ancient world, documenting important events and dates from the past (Hunter 2003, 11). From the ancient world of Babylon to the civilizations of Rome and Greece, valuable documents and resources recorded on clay, papyrus, and more were found depicting important information about trading, laws, and culture (Hunter 2003, 11). These resources were found in locations specifically created to house files and documents based on standard practices of recordkeeping created by each civilization. The concept of recordkeeping and organizing data about historical events, business, and daily affairs continued as developing cultures required information to be kept in a safe space.

Following the growth of record management in the ancient world, modern archives developed with standards and protocols that are the principal outlines of archives today. According to Hunter, "Modern archives began in 1543 at Simancas in Spain but the archives of today truly developed after the French Revolution" (Hunter 2003, 12). As a result of trying to protect the rights of citizens and recently won freedom, the French

established the first modern national archives (Hunter 2003, 12). When radicals wanted to destroy the records from the monarchy to erase evidence of the past, citizens stated that keeping the records would express the faults of the monarchy and that it would be historically important for the citizens of France to keep those documents, as it would represent a victory over the unjust monarchs (Hunter 2003, 12).

In archives today, archivists are facing challenges with diverse types of media records (Hunter 2003, 16). With a variety of media options in an archive, ranging from electronic, photographic, magnetic media, and more, it is a challenge for archivists to find ways to maintain these records and ensure continued access into the future. The shift from paper to digital platforms presents archivists today with new challenges. This especially causes a challenge for digital media archival records that comes from platforms that are no longer of use and when accessing the records can cause damage to the original due to its condition and age. This is also an issue in regards to recordkeeping because digital management systems that aid with organization of the archival collection can also become obsolete in regards to technology. It is important that archivists maintain a level of understanding and best practices with regards to digital platforms and preservation in order to ensure continued access via collection management systems as well as archival records despite the digital platform.

With support from professional organizations, such as the Society of American Archivists, archivists today are provided with procedures and best practices. This national association also provides important guidelines that support the education of archivists and

valuable instruction on archive management, arrangement, preservation, and more. This information, plus a certification from the Academy of Certified Archivists, demonstrates an understanding of archival knowledge, skills, and ethics.

Management of Archives

Job Description, Role, and Tasks of the Archivist

Archivists that work in archives are well-versed in the institutional history and legacy information that their organization provides. All archivists have the same requirements to maintain records and preserve them due to their inherent value to the organization that created the records. According the Society of American Archivists (SAA), "The primary task of the archivist is to establish and maintain control, both physical and intellectual, over records of enduring value" (SAA 2016a). As mentioned previously, these types of records are typically not of current use, are primarily preserved for their history, and are often used for research and historical reference of the organization.

The SAA defines the term *archivist* as follows: "An individual responsible for appraising, acquiring, arranging, describing, preserving, and providing access to records of enduring value, according to the principles of provenance, original order, and collective control to protect the materials' authenticity and context" (SAA 2016b). These tasks, as outlined by the SAA, provide an overview of an archivist's professional duties and responsibilities. Without any of the above listed tasks, an archive can not function

properly and will not be considered accessible to researchers and archivists alike. Therefore, the management of the archive is an integral responsibility of the archivists involved.

The management of an archive is important in making the archive function and operate not only according to best practices provided by the SAA and other professional associations, but to ensure that archival records maintain their value through tasks like arrangement and access. The SAA states that an archivist is "an individual with responsibility for management and oversight of an archival repository or of records of enduring value" (SAA 2016b). The archive can only maintain the value of archival records through the organization, and tasks must be completed to make records accessible and known to those who may need their historical information.

The SAA notes that some archivists may be responsible for both inactive and active records depending on the type of organization or institution the archive is supporting (SAA 2016b). This may require the archivist to provide preservation, organization, and access to inactive records such as previously described institutional history materials, as well as active records that are best defined as current records. The SAA defines active records as "records that continue to be used with sufficient frequency to justify keeping them in the office of creation" (SAA 2016b). This requires the archivist to be efficient when organizing and arranging archives in a manner that keeps active records constantly available to staff members that created the documents as well as the ones that require regular access.

Whatever job requirements archivists may encounter, the culture of the archive requires that they understand the basics of the tasks in a typical archive. The SAA outlines the necessary components of archival work completed by an archivist by stating what archivists need to do first which is to, "select records, a process that requires an understanding of the historical context in which the records were created, the uses for which they were intended, and their relationships to other sources" (SAA 2016a). Here, the SAA emphasizes the need to have institutional context when creating archival records because the archivist can then understand the need to keep a specific record or not.

The next step in the process of managing archival records outlined by the SAA is, "the archivist then arranges and describes the records, in accordance with accepted standards and practices..." (SAA 2016a). The "arrangement and description" step is important because it helps with future access for scholars, researchers, or staff of the organization. According to Hunter, the arrangement step is the organization of records to aid with access, based on the identification of the contents and the significance of the record (Hunter 2003, 113). The important aspects to identify in the records when it comes to the arrangement in the archive are the record's provenance and the original order in which the record was used. The provenance of the archival record is important to the archivist, as it provides a method of organization as well as important historical and legacy data about the record. The method of organization that provenance provides is based on the creator or a significant person who also owned the record. The original order is important to the archivist because it emphasizes how the records should be maintained,

mainly due to how they were kept or ordered by the institution or organization originally (Hunter 2003, 114). Hunter discusses how original order is very useful to researchers, as well as to archivists, because it provides knowledge about how the records were used by the creator (Hunter 2003, 114.)

Once the archivist uses the provenance and the original order to aid in arrangement, the archival records will be packed, labeled, and put onto shelves in order to help organize and maintain access. The arrangement is very organized and often follows the concept of "levels arrangement" created by Oliver Wendell Holmes of the U.S. National Archives in the 1960s (Hunter 2003, 115). Although a very basic concept, Holmes developed this by simply creating an arrangement for the records based on five levels that coordinate with each other (Hunter 2003, 115). The five levels are: repository, record group (collection) and subgroup, series, file unit, and item (Hunter 2003, 115).

A definition of the five levels will help to explain the levels and the significance of maintaining this type of organization in an archive. According to the SAA, a *repository* is, "a place where things can be stored and maintained" (SAA 2016b). Archives and repositories are often interchangeable words that support the maintenance and preservation of archival records.

In regards to the *record group (collection) and subgroup* level, Hunter defines *record group* as, "a body of organizationally related records established on the basis of provenance, with particular regard for the complexity and volume of the records and the administrative history of the record-creating institution or organization" (Hunter 2003,

116). The record group can be classified as an exclusive collection of records with its own distinct provenance. The *subgroup*, according to Hunter, "is a major division within the record group" (Hunter 2003, 116). To continue with the example of the classification of an exclusive collection, a subgroup would be specific aspect or work done by a specific person within that collection.

A *series*, defined by Hunter, "is a group of files or documents maintained together as a unit because of some relationship arising out of their creation, receipt, or use" (Hunter 2003, 117). The records within a series relate to each other due to activities, functions, subjects, or form. At this level of the arrangement, record series is important to the archivist because the archivist uses this description to best organize the archival collection. At this level, the description could be very helpful for the archivist to locate specific files for researchers (Hunter 2003, 117).

For the archivist, the *file unit* level is a major component for physically organizing the records. Hunter states that "record creators place individual item into units for ease of filing" (Hunter 2003, 118). Hunter also emphasizes that the file unit can come in many shapes and sizes and can be "file folders, bound volumes, magnetic disk packs, and countless other items" (Hunter 2003, 118). In respect to original order, these file units can be organized in a number of ways: alphabetical, chronological, geographical, subject, and numerical. (Hunter 2003, 118). The file unit level is an important level for archivists to make organizational decisions about how to locate file units within a record series.

The final level of arrangement described by Holmes is *item*. At this level, an item can be defined by the material held within the file unit. This can be a document of any length, a digital file, or even a 3-D object (Hunter 2003, 118).

The concept of "levels arrangement" for archives is just one small component of the tasks an archivist has to complete for an archive to operate and function properly. It is important that all archivists who work within the archival field accept standards and practices, ensure and provide long-term preservation for the archival collection, and assist researchers when necessary. Archivists also need to apply high quality work ethics and principles to the management of their work in order for archives to operate efficiently for organizations and institutions, especially as they continue to add more material.

Best Practices

Best practices in archives aim to maintain a system of order and high quality work on behalf of the archivists. One of the most important practices to uphold in an archive is preservation of the collection. From fire protection, to security, to lighting, it is an important and a mandatory practice to do all within an organization's financial means and administrative support to protect the archival collection.

Due to the nature of archives and the importance of providing a space for researchers in the archive, security is a necessary component for preserving the collection. The archivist must develop and implement security protocols in order to make sure that the people conducting research understand the importance of maintaining the

integrity of the archival collection. Therefore, visitor forms are created to obtain information about the researcher, and often times, this process has to be done ahead of time so the archivist can pull the correct files and scan for documents that may need to be restricted for privacy concerns. The security of an archive would not be complete without cameras and staff members to ensure that defacement, theft, alteration, or physical damage are not caused to any of the records by the researchers who visit the archive (Hunter 2003, 373). Proper security measures can prevent many unwanted issues to the archival collection by following standard procedures and guidelines.

Another best practice of preservation in an archive is environmental monitoring. The environmental monitoring of all types of archival materials is important to maintaining the condition and quality of the collection. For example, lighting can cause irreversible damage to paper records; therefore, it is important to make sure that records have the best protection from the light used by the archivists in storage. According to Hunter, some ways to minimize the effects of light damage on archival records include: using archival boxes to protect material from direct exposure; eliminate windows, or cover existing windows with ultraviolet light filters; avoid damage from fluorescent light bulbs by using filters or switching to LEDs; keeping light levels down when not in use (Hunter 2003, 168). Other environmental issues that can be prevented by monitoring best practices include detailed monitoring of temperature, humidity, air quality, and pests or other biological agents (Hunter 2003, 164).

Archives in Libraries and Museums

The culture and role of archives is important to understand preserving records and providing access. The specific duties and tasks completed in an archive can support any type of organization or institution that would like to manage and organize their records. The relationship that archives have with libraries and museums can be understood by examining the traditions that each of the three cultural institutions follow: each strives to educate the public with their collections by ensuring the preservation of their collection materials (Smith 2014, 126). Although these traditions are done differently in a library, compared to a museum or an archive, the three cultural institutions play an important role in preservation and access.

As previously discussed, archives are a repository for institutional records that have enduring value. Considering that libraries are a repository for books, and museums are a repository for objects, these institutions create and produce historical records, legacy data, and important documents that also require organization of their records. An archive within a library or museum provides an opportunity for the appropriate management of archival records and a way to organize institutional history that ultimately benefits the institution. With the arrangement and description of archival records, archives in museums and libraries can help organize their institutional history and legacy data for researchers, as well as for the staff, who can use the records to advance the visitor experience.

In the next chapter, the relationship between libraries, archives, and museums will be examined. By collaborating, libraries, archives, and museums can provide a better future not only for the institution and the organization of collections and records, but also for the visitor. The partnership between these cultural institutions is already sparking achievement in the success of museum archives, as they integrate best practices and superior collections stewardship from each institution to create a highly organized, transparent museum.

Chapter 3: Libraries, Archives, and Museums

This chapter focuses on the relationship between libraries, archives, and museums (LAMs). Although they differ in structure and organization, in their relationship to the public and to their surrounding communities, and in their differing missions, practices, and standards, LAMs share many similar functions and strategies. In particular, LAMs have the ability to work together to highlight what each do best to enhance the efforts of the others in their quest to serve the public. Working together, LAMs can manage tasks comprehensively and implement best practices and standards at higher levels of efficiency and quality.

Within museums, it is important to understand how libraries and non-museum archives relate to museum archives, especially when it comes to organizing documents, managing archival material, and creating a system that is accessible to staff and the public. As outlined below, the emerging partnership between LAMs aims to enhance the success of collaboration by having each cultural institution supply the others with thorough approaches to management, best practices, and preservation.

Definitions

To understand the relationship between libraries, archives, and museums, it is best to start by outlining the definition of each type of institution. The largest and oldest professional library association, the American Library Association (ALA) defines a library as follows: "A library is a collection of resources in a variety of formats that is

organized by information professionals or other experts who provide convenient physical,

digital, bibliographic, or intellectual access and offer targeted services and programs with

the mission of educating, informing, or entertaining a variety of audiences and the goal of

stimulating individual learning and advancing society as a whole" (ALA 2016b). Note

that this definition includes a digital component. Libraries, although often thought of in a

traditional setting of stacks of books, are now being influenced by the digital age by

providing online access to their collections and maintaining digital libraries.

As for archives, they are defined in the the glossary on the Society of American

Archivists (SAA) website. As Hunter's definition provided in the previous chapter makes

clear, the term *archives* has multiple meanings, however, the SAA (SAA 2016b) provides

several options for defining the functions and characteristics of archives. The glossary

provides the following definition of archive:

1. Materials created or received by a person, family, or organization, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs and preserved because of the enduring value contained in the information they contain or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator, especially those materials maintained using the principles of provenance, original order, and collective control; permanent records.
2. The division within an organization responsible for maintaining the organization's records of enduring value.
3. An organization that collects the records of individuals, families, or other organizations; a collecting archives.
4. The professional discipline of administering such collections and organizations.
5. The building (or portion thereof) housing archival collections.
6. A published collection of scholarly papers, especially as a periodical.

Notably, archives are not just defined by their physical composition or presence within a

building, but by their meaning and how they are managed and organized. This definition

provided by the SAA establishes six different interpretations of the word *archive*, which emphasizes a very valuable assessment about archives: *archives* is an encompassing term for a practice that holds responsibility in the quality of the structure that houses the collection, the action of collecting and preserving valuable history and records, and the profession that emphasizes the importance of stewardship, management, and transparency.

Like archive, the term *museum* can be defined in several ways. As museums have continued to evolve over time, the definition has changed for the betterment of the objects, art, and artifacts they hold, as well as for the people they serve. First, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) defines *museum* in the ICOM Statutes as follows, "A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment" (ICOM 2016). Although this definition applies to many museums, it does not apply to all. For example, some museums are for-profit, while others may not have a permanent, physical structure, such as those found online as a digital museum. However, the ICOM definition encompasses many of the great museums of the world today, especially as museums increasingly emphasize service to the community and maintaining transparency.

When taking a closer look on what the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) had to say in regards to a definition for museum, there was not one straight-forward

definition. The professional organization offers assorted "museum facts" on their website indicating information about how popular museums are, how they serve the public, their relationship with the community, and more details focusing on education (AAM 2013). The lack of definition of museum from the AAM shows how the interpretation of what a museum is more flexible in the American context.

For this thesis, it is important to supply a definition of the term *museum*. A useful definition and the one that will be used here, was recently offered by the professor and scholar Eugene Dillenburg (2011): "The common denominator [of museums] is making a unique contribution to the public by collecting, preserving, and interpreting the things of this world" (Dillenburg, 2011). Giving the term *museum* a very broad definition, such as the one presented above, indicates that despite the differences that one museum may have from the next, they are a unique type of institution that possess objects, art, or artifacts to collect, preserve, and provide as educational material for the public.

Similarities

Now that libraries, archives, and museums have been defined, it is important to highlight their similarities. Their similarities are important in not only understanding their functionality but how they can best work together to serve communities to the best of their abilities. Libraries, archives, and museums all have one major aspect in common: preservation of a collection. As cultural memory institutions, LAMs are responsible to preserve collections in order to ensure long-term access for the public.

Memory institutions such as libraries, archives, and museums have responsibilities to society that include providing access to their collections within institutional policies. In *Preservation Management for Libraries, Archives and Museums*, Helen Forde states, "the provision of public resources to libraries, museums and archives (defined as memory institutions) confers a social as well as a moral obligation on them to facilitate access to the information they hold…" (Forde 2007, 167). LAMs provide access to the public but in three distinctive ways. A library's collections are kept on the shelves and are checked out by patrons, but can also be found in special collection storage when the material is sensitive and important. Archives hold their records, historical information, and collections in their facilities but do not catalog at the object or item level like libraries and museums (Wythe 2004, 43). Finally, museums keep their collections in their facilities and on display in the galleries for exhibitions, all tracked at the object level to know where each object is located at all times. These three types of collections, although different in arrangement, recordkeeping, and management, maintain a goal of preservation of the object, art, artifact, or record.

In *The Preservation Management Handbook: A 21st-Century Guide for Libraries, Archives, and Museums* (2014), Ross Harvey and Martha R. Mahard emphasize the need for cultural heritage professionals to have a preservation plan for their collections. Not only is it important to get the support of all stakeholders involved with the collection - patrons, volunteers, and staff - but more so because preservation of the collection is an institutional mandate and an ethical responsibility of the staff to protect the objects

(Harvey and Mahard 2014, 39-40). All three types of cultural heritage institutions are required to maintain active and proper care of their collection, which can be publicly accessed. This is done through preventive conservation, cataloging, and inventory processes that allow for managers of the collection to keep track of objects and their condition.

Differences

While libraries, archives, and museums share similar ethical obligations in regards to collections care, their cataloging practices differ as does the presentation of their collections to the public. Polly Darnell said it best when describing the differences regarding the arrangement of archives as opposed to museum collections: "While they all control collections that are made accessible through some form of descriptive cataloging, they come from professions that developed at different times from separate traditions" (Darnell 2004, 35). Due to the nature of each cultural institution, LAMs all provide different platforms for the public to access and interpret their collections.

Libraries and archives provide their users with the opportunity to access their collections by letting the user physically interact with the object, therefore allowing users to interpret the content themselves. This also requires that libraries and archives take different avenues of preservation, as well as security, because of the needs of the user (Harvey and Mahard 2014, 48). Going into the digital age, this open platform for

interacting and accessing the collections provides a good opportunity for libraries and archives to preserve their collections longer by making materials available digitally.

When it comes to the museum world, users do not get the opportunity to access and interpret the collections the way they would in library or archive. Not only is the education material and object information provided by the museum, interpreting the objects on display requires trust in the museum, for example, trust in the provenance, curatorial research, conservation, and overall care of the object. Although keeping objects, art, and artifacts out of the hands of museum visitors ensures their long-term stability and preservation, the user does not get to physically interact with the collection on their own terms. Objects, art, and artifacts are put on display in a manner that aligns with the tradition of museums to exhibit works for the public. To address user interest in interacting with objects today, museums are aiming for transparency by digitizing collections and creating visible collections storage in order to allow the public to see their holdings and to gain a greater form of access.

Collaborations

Collaborations between LAMs provides a wide-range of benefits for each of the cultural institutions. Bringing their special skills together will result in serving the public better. Libraries ensure consistent public access and have established a strong foundation in digital preservation. Archives focus on institutional histories and can provide support for public and private organizations by supplying transparent records that provide

evidence of important institutional transaction. Museums provide an interpretive

framework of exhibitions where they use their well-preserved collections to create stories

that offer opportunities for the public to visually access objects, art, and artifacts.

Together, LAMs can compliment each other by individually supplying their expertise in

the preservation of diverse collections, maintaining transparency, and ensuring movement

and accessibility into the digital age.

In a guide to collaboration, provided by International Federation of Library

Associations and Institutions (Yarrow, Clubb, and Draper 2008, 31), there is a list of best

practices that LAMs can adhere to:

a) They support life-long learning and/or community development
b) They optimise the services provided
c) They enable universal access to community resources
d) They broaden the customer base in the community for the institutions involved
e) They address the need for preservation of heritage materials

According to the best practices for LAMs collaboration to take place, it is important for

the three types of institutions to see how their practices can help another. For example, in

order for museums to become accredited by the American Alliance of Museums,

museums have to ensure preservation of the collection. Often museums demonstrate a

commitment to preservation through environmental monitoring, integrated pest

management, and controlled light levels, for all objects on display or in storage. Although

libraries and archives provide preservation of their materials, due to the fact that libraries

loan out their collections to the public and archives do not catalog their collection to the

item-level, it is important for museums to share their preventive practices in order to help preserve archival and library collections at a larger degree.

As stated above by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, best practices applied within a given archive that is working in collaboration with a specific museum have the potential to "optimise the services provided" (Yarrow, Clubb, and Draper 2008, 31). For example, these services can apply to the museum curator who can now access files that reflect institutional history of previous exhibits and who can now acquire notes from past curators. Museum archives allow access to donor history, legacy information about the foundation of the museum, and support research involving collections, education, and more. This partnership between the museum archives and the rest of of the museum staff supplies the museum with fundamental information that can be used to educate, inform, and entertain the public.

The term museum archives expresses collaboration between two different types of institutions. When an archive is present within a museum and implements institutional documents, such as a mission statement or statement of purpose in consultation with museum authorities, the goal of the museum archive is to support the museum with archival best practices. These best practices will aid the function of the museum due to the collaboration between the museum and archive staff.

The collaboration between a museum and the museum archive fosters mutual understanding of the differences that their traditions of operations and management can bring. In "Beyond the Silos of the LAMs: Collaboration of Among Libraries, Archives,

and Museums," Diane M. Zorich, Günter Waibel, and Ricky Erway (2008) suggest the importance of sharing a unified vision through differences in strategy: "Collaborations that emerge from a shared vision are more strategic, productive, and long-term. More importantly, they have the ability to significantly transform services and functions they provide to their user communities" (Zorich, Waibel, and Erway 2008, 22). By developing an archive within a museum, the institution creates the opportunity to present a more well-rounded institutional history and organizational vision for the staff, which ultimately benefits the public. The museum archive preserves and manages files that are often set aside due to lack of professional archival staff members, and who are informed on the importance of non-current materials. This type of information can be extremely useful to several staff members when arranged in an organized manner. Conservators, educators, curators, development teams, administrators, and others can benefit from the holdings of institutional files and legacy data arranged by museum archivists. This data can then be used to share valuable information with the community, and in certain situations, can be used to welcome the community to learn more about its local museum history and legacy. A collaborative relationship between the museum and the museum archive is important and needs to be supported by higher level administrators in order to allow museum staff to see the necessity and value of an institutional archive.

The next chapter focuses directly on museum archives. After discussing the significance of a partnership between LAMs, the discussion will shift to examining how

museum archives contribute to best practices when management and preservation are the forefront of collaboration. Museum archives not only provide a museum with an organized archival collection of important and valuable institutional documents, but insight to the betterment of collection care, organizational history, and the professional archival practice.

Chapter 4: Museum Archives

In this chapter, the definition, history, and management of museum archives will be examined to understand the function and operation of museum archives as well as emphasize the important role archives play within a museum. First, a definition of museum archives will be presented in order to best understand an archive in a museum setting. Second, the history of museum archives will be outlined to understand why this type of archive has begun to be recognized as a necessary component in any museum. Third, the management of museum archives will be discussed, including the job description, role, and tasks of a museum archivist, as well as policies, budget, and best practices relating to archives. The chapter will conclude by distinguishing a formal museum archive from an informal archive, and providing a definition for each. These definitions are important to understanding because the highlight how a museum can benefit from delineating formal and informal archives. As outlined earlier, archives can be defined as a collection of materials of various media that consist of non-current legal, fiscal, administrative, or research material that reflect institutional history. For the purpose of this thesis, the examination of archives is divided into two broad categories: a general discussion of archives, as outlined in Chapter 2, and museum archives, as outlined specifically below.

Definition

In the same manner as archives previously defined, *museum archives* rely heavily on the understanding of the historical context of the institution in order to function at their best. A working archive in a museum requires that it adheres to the history, mission, and future of the museum. Like archives, museum archives are part of a broader institution, and for museum archives to be functional and useful, the history and organization of the museum must be considered. As museum archives are subsumed into the broader museum mission, the policies, procedures, and guidelines of the museum must be considered, as two important roles are served. As Wythe notes from *Museum Archives: An Introduction*, "The museum archives is both a resource for the administration and for researchers: it is necessary for the day-to-day operation of the museum and it serves researchers of all kinds. Neither role should be overshadowed by the other" (Wythe 2004, 11). At the same time, access to museum archives provides the staff with reference to legacy material that allows for opportunities to research past institutional histories, from administrative paperwork to information about objects in previous exhibitions. Significantly, within a museum archive, the documents that are kept are special and irreplaceable, and provide not only historical information, but research materials for staff, and in some cases, for outside researchers.

The roles that the museum archive fulfills for the institution creates opportunities to establish a research hub that museum staff can use to find resources for a variety of needs. For example, exhibition and preparation teams can access previous exhibitions

materials in the archive and use the information to determine construction dates of exhibit cases. Administrative staff members can use the archive to learn more about the development of the institution in order to understand how policies were created at the establishment of the museum.

Museum archives hold a range of records that include administrative, legal, and research information that are not in current use. Each of the types of records included in museum archives recognize important institutional history, as well as legacy data, that should be maintained because it is relevant to policy, accession, and retention. As the Society of American Archivists (SAA) notes, museum archives can hold a variety of type of records including *organizational records*, *collection records*, and *acquired materials* (SAA 2016c).

Organizational records consist mostly of administrative paperwork or information that can be useful resources for all levels and departments within a museum. The SAA gives examples for the organizational records as, "correspondence, memoranda, minutes, financial records, reports, grant records, departmental files, architectural plans, documentary photographs and negatives, film, audio and videotapes, and publications created by the museum" (SAA 2016c). This type of information provides insight for museum development, challenges, and growth over the years, recognizes details that were crucial to the foundation of the institution, how an institution changed over time, data on finances, personnel, and museum programs. When a well-organized museum archive consists of organizational records, opportunities will be

opened up for research and expansion of knowledge, and a transparent environment for the staff to understand their institution is created.

Collection records in a museum archive also create an opportunity for staff to appreciate and understand the significance of the history of their collections. The SAA describes collection records as, "as object or specimen files and records of exhibitions and installations" (SAA 2016c). Although the museum archive houses records that are *not* in current use, collection records currently in use may be kept in registration, collections management, or curatorial offices. Although there could be information about a previous exhibition in the museum archive, the information about the object may be kept in registration, or a previous conservation treatment condition report may be kept in a conservation lab. These differing locations may be present access challenges and may make it difficult to collect important institutional history when other departments are holding on to their own object files.

Acquired materials are mostly supportive documents that add value to the museum as an institution, collection, or mission. The SAA expresses that acquired materials are mostly "papers of individuals and organizations, which promote the museum's mission through their relation to subject areas of particular interest to the museum (e.g., science, anthropology, natural history, art, history) and which add value to the museum's collections and exhibition programs" (SAA 2016c). A museum archive that holds this type of information can provide important resources for research and recommendations for curators, conservators, and more.

History of Museum Archives

Both museums and archives function similarly as they both each collect, house, and preserve collections for educational and display purposes. Although their overall characteristics would make it seem as though museums and archives naturally would work together under one institution, it took years for museums to recognize the need for an institutional archive. One notable exception is the Smithsonian, which recognized a need for someone to care for their museum records, and hired an archivist in the 1890s (Przybyla 2004, 4). Although museums recognized the large paper trail they were creating, they were focusing more on the programs they were providing to the community, not the importance of collecting and recording associated material.

Two key developments in the history of museum archives were first, a grant awarded to the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1978 by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to create an archival program, and the second, a conference organized by museum archives pioneer, Arthur Breton of the Smithsonian Archives of American Art. In December, 1979, with these two developments, the museum archives movement took off. The conference, located at the Smithsonian's Belmont Conference Center in Elkridge, Maryland, welcomed twenty-two archivists and librarians from the United States and Canada.

According to Ann Marie Przybyla (2004) in *Museum Archives: An Introduction*, the conference included discussions about "the advantages of having an archives program, how to initiate one, costs and funding, research use by staff and scholars, and

appropriate measures for storage. On the second day, however, participants abandoned the agenda to spend two hours drafting a set of guidelines for museum archives. Directed primarily at museum administrators, the guidelines were eventually distributed in brochure form to hundreds of museums and published in several professional journals" (Przybyla 2004, 4-5). These steps, led by Arthur Breton, would help museum archivists advocate for the management, budget, and space for museum archives.

By the mid 1980s, as awareness of museum archives grew strongly within the profession, and after surveying institutions across the nation, museums were expressing the benefits of archives. As Przybyla notes, "As was to be expected, curators found that institutional records are a valuable research tool for planning exhibitions, preparing publications, and caring for a collection. Beyond the demands of curatorial research, museum archivists were providing support to all segments of the institutional population, utilizing records for previously undiscovered purposes" (Przybyla 2004, 6). Museum archives records became accessible and useful to all departments in the museum that used them. Education, development, and outside scholars were able to use institutional records as a rich source of museum history.

As museum archives continued to grow and efforts to professional their management expanded, during the 1980s, professional groups such as the American Association of Museums (now the American Alliance of Museums) began to integrate issues concerning museum archives and recordkeeping into the annual conference. By 1987, only eight years after the Belmont Conference, the American Alliance of Museums

(AAM) had added questions about museum archives and recordkeeping to the list of criteria used to assess for accreditation (Przybyla 2004, 6). Museum archives and archivists were gaining strength and proving that recordkeeping of institutional history and legacy data of all administrative types would be a significant source of knowledge of education for and about the museum.

More recently, museum archives, despite their importance, have faced budget threats and financial hardship, even though they must remain open and functional. Not only have curators fought to keep their archives open, but museum administrations have learned the importance of having museum archivists on their team. In the late 1990s, as provenance issues concerning Nazi-looted art, antiquities, and NAGPRA developed in the museum world, the institutional knowledge found in museum archives was essential in addressing these issues, and the support of archives was considered important (Przybyla 2004, 7).

As museums move forward into the digital age, museum and archives have a new avenue to share, collect, and preserve information. Przybyla points out that archivists "have been exploring methods of electronic records preservation for decades" and that they can be helpful when it comes to supporting curators with digital art, registrars with collection management systems, and working with online public databases on museum websites (Przybyla 2004, 7). Integrating museum and archival work creates a complementary system that keeps museum records and data active, intertwining vital institutional history and legacy information. It is important for museum archivists to

represent themselves as important and integral figures in their museums, as well as to recognize their vital, creative, and insightful role in museum operations (Przybyla 2004, 8).

Management of Museum Archives

Job Description, Role, and Tasks of the Museum Archivist

An archivist in a museum practices similar methods to an archivist in any type of archive. According the SAA, archivists are "individuals with responsibility for management and oversight of an archival repository or of records of enduring value" (SAA 2016b). Although a museum archivist has the same responsibilities as archivists outside of museums, they must also meet all of the requirements of their job and daily operations while upholding the institution's vision and mission. Museum archivists' responsibilities "are to appraise, acquire, arrange, describe, preserve, and make available the records of the museum and collections of related materials acquired from outside the museum" (SAA 2016c). Museum archivists work with all departments, and can supply all with information and documents (Wythe 2004, 11).

Deborah Wythe describes a museum archivist's task of not only creating finding aids, a resource that helps with locating a document in the archive, but as also making documents and information outside of the archive accessible. As Wythe outlines, "It may also involve advising the person who inquires where to find information in another department. Archivists are often the best resource for 'who has what' in the museum as a

result of records surveys and familiarity with both current and inactive records" (Wythe 2004, 12). For museums to function well, it is important to have a person on staff who can direct other staff members where to go to help them access information about items such as donor history, old conservation reports, and past exhibitions. The archivist's role becomes a vital aspect of not only keeping the museum's files, records, and paperwork more organized, but allow for future generations to access materials and to make them understandable in the context of the museum's history, mission, and vision.

To be a museum archivist, there is typically a requirement for education, training, and experience involved. A master's degree in library science or archival studies usually warrants the proper training to establish and adhere to procedures and protocols that make archives function at the highest levels. Skills such as understanding appraisal, arrangement, and preservation are taught to archivists, as well as how to handle materials within an archive.

Policies

The management, legal framework, and ethics of an institution are important to museum archivists. When it comes to policy, museum archivists look to a museum's administration to set a direction of the museum archive. The SAA provides guidelines that express that, "A museum should maintain an active, professional archives program to systematically collect, organize, preserve, and provide access to its organizational records of enduring value and to recommend policies and procedures for the creation,

maintenance, and ultimate retention or disposition of current museum records in all formats" (SAA 2016c). However, in order to follow all of the tasks outlined above, the SAA recommends that museum archives have their own mission statement. A mission statement allows museum archives to work under the direction of the museum administration and board of trustees while outlining the specific requirements and goals of museum archives. A mission statement for the archive also provides structure for policies to be made and amended by museum archivists, to best suit the institution and staff (SAA 2016c).

Once the museum administration and governing board decide how they want the museum archives to function, the archivist is responsible for creating the policies and procedures necessary to carry out a well-organized and successful archive. Policies and procedures provide all the necessary requirements, actions, and practices for conducting archival tasks. Acquisition policies, protocols for handling records, deeds of gift, records schedule, and disaster plans are just some of the administrative aspects of a museum archivist's job (SAA 2016d).

The acquisition policy, for example, provides the guidelines for what the museum archive is going to bring into the archival collection. The acquisition policy does not necessarily focus on the documents that were made within the institution but those that have been given to the archive because they relate to the mission or institution in some way. The SAA states that an acquisition policy should, "describe the conditions and procedures for accessioning and deaccessioning documents and collections that are not

official records of the museum, and address principles regarding the ownership, administration, and use of all acquired materials" (SAA 2016c). The challenge with an acquisition policy is that procedures are usually in place for acquiring objects under the collections and registration department (Demb 2004, 96). So the different process and methodology for acquiring art or objects versus archival material must always be distinguished.

For policy, it is also important to outline how archival material is acquired from within the institution. As Demb outlines, "Museum records - records created in the daily business of the institution and its departments - are already the legal property of the institution. The accession of museum records is a record of the *transfer* of materials from the department of origin or custody to the archives" (Demb 2004, 96). The type of material that is created from within the institution is not only valuable for the association to the objects, exhibits, or donors, but because it expresses the museum's values and mission alignment at a certain point in history.

In the "Museum Archives Guidelines" (2016), the Society of American Archivists discusses the importance of recognizing institution-made documents. Specifically, the guidelines recommend that the museum create a policy about museum records versus personal papers: "The museum should have a statement of policy which clarifies the difference between the official records of the museum and documents which might be considered the personal property of curators, directors, members of governing bodies, and other relevant positions. This is to discourage such persons from taking, as their own

property, records that belong to the parent institution or museum, and that may be an integral part of the museum's archives" (SAA 2016c). These documents may carry private or confidential information about the museum, but also can be very important to explaining or understanding institutional history or legacy data. The SAA recommends that staff donate personal papers in order to collect vital institutional information within the museum archive (SAA 2016c).

Financial Support

One of the biggest challenges museums face is finding financial support so that their departments and programs can be successful. The first step in the process is to obtain the support of the senior museum administrators and the board of trustees. This support is fundamental for the support of future endeavors and is necessary for the functioning of the museum. In *Museum Archives: An Introduction* author Susan Klier Koutsky emphasizes the importance of support from museum authorities and the need to keep records of that support. Koutsky states, "...obtain institutional support from the highest level of museum authority. Ensure that the inception of an archival program is documented in the minutes of a board meeting and obtain written support from the necessary authorities. The archives program requires this ongoing support so that funds are allocated in every budget year, the archives is recognized during strategic planning efforts, and the needs of a growing archives program are addressed and met" (Koutsky 2004, 20). Museum archives require financial support to function properly, especially

when best practices and standards are a goal. Therefore, it is ideal to have a separate budget line in the institutional operating funds to ensure the financial needs for the archives are met every fiscal year (Koutsky 2004, 20).

Like other museum departments, the budget allocated to the museum archive may not be enough to fully support the archive. Koutsky notes that the popular avenue taken by most museums to help fund departments is through grants (Koutsky 2004, 20). Finding a grant program that matches the mission, goals, and needs of the museum or the museum archive is an important first step in seeking a grant. Whether the grant program is federally or privately funded, it is important to follow the guidelines in order to be successful. Although grants can provide much-needed financial support to institutions, it is important to recognize that grant applications take time, and more importantly, that they should not be considered the main source of funding (Koutsky 2004, 21). Grants are best used for special projects and can be useful supplements to already stable institutional operating funds.

A budget line for museum archives will need to consider staff salaries and benefits, equipment, tools, supplies, and other important items such as travel and computer maintenance (Koutsky 2004, 21). Over time, purchases can be made to invest in necessary equipment that meets best practices and standards, especially to fulfill accreditation requirements with professional organizations such as the AAM. The high standards practiced in managing museum archives, and the support given to archives through administration and budget demonstrates to museum staff the importance of the

archive. This perception of the museum archive will then cultivate other museum staff to work with the archivist and the archive (Koutsky 2004, 20).

Best Practices

According to professional organizations such as the American Alliance of Museums, best practices, standards, and ethics are developed to support a healthy and robust museum community. Although these practices and standards may not be achievable due to financial restraints, museum archives and their corresponding administrators need to do what they can to best support the archives. Storage space, staff, environment, and policies are just the preliminary items the administration needs to support the archive in order to meet best practices.

According to the "Characteristics of Excellence" (2013) provided by the AAM for museum accreditation, the methods for how specific practices are conducted in a museum can be an indicator of best practices. The AAM states, "The museum legally, ethically, and effectively manages, documents, cares for, and uses the collections" (AAM 2013b). With reference to the object, art, and artifact collections, the museum archive also provides a physical location where important, non-circulating materials are kept. These materials are preserved, secured, and managed by a trained professional. Therefore, museum archives can also be considered as part of the legal, ethical, and best practice approach outlined by the AAM, to support institutional significance, development of the staff, and transparency to the community.

Museum archival materials, like art or object collections, require preservation and sometimes conservation, to ensure the best care. For example, the storage facility for archives requires necessary facility adjustments such as climate control and safe lighting. A controlled environment can ensure that archival materials will be better preserved over time as well as prevent further issues caused by unstable climates such as pest management problems or issues caused by humidity (Fisher 2010, 287-292). Preservation of archival materials can also be ensured by hiring a staff that knows how to handle, care for, and manage an archival collection. This staff member can provide training to those that lack the understanding for archival collection care. This person can also advocate for the archival material by supporting the need for climate control, integrated pest management, security, the use of archival supplies and equipment, and archival policies and procedures (Fisher 2010, 287-292).

When it comes to archival policies and procedures, the museum administration's support is one of the primary guiding factors. Not only will the administrators' support set precedent for all staff members to see the importance and significance of the museum archives, but it will encourage adherence to the policies and procedures of the archive (Koutsky 2004, 20). Often times, the support of administrators is complimented by a mission statement for the archives, or a statement of purpose. These institutional documents are in place to establish the museum archives' role and responsibility and outline the policies and procedures that are consistent with missions or statements of purpose. Policies and procedures include acquisition policy, records management policy,

emergency plans, how to create finding aids, and records disposition schedules (SAA 2016d). As noted above, a mission statement and statement of purpose provides guidelines for best practices in archives. Overall, policies and institutional documents can be used to outline standards and ethics that those working with the museum archive material can use in daily practice or for museum accreditation, as the documents ensure not only best practices but also make the work being done in the museum archive transparent.

Formal versus Informal Museum Archives

<u>Definitions</u>

For the purposes of this thesis, it is necessary to examine the meaning of *formal* versus *informal* museum archives. The definition of a *formal* archive emphasizes the collected materials that include, but are not limited to, paper, electronic, photographic, and magnetic media (SAA 2016c). Formal archives are often organized by policies, procedures, forms, and protocols. Formal archives are a primary source for an integral collection of institutional history records and documentation. Museum archive staff is trained and educated in library science or archival studies, which prepares them for collecting, preserving, and arranging materials.

An *informal* museum archive also consists of collected materials of different media, but may not be recognized by the museum for its significance and value, not managed by a professional archivist in an organized way, or not subject to policies,

procedures, forms, and protocols. As this definition highlights, it is a challenging to define what an informal museum archive is and how it functions, because museums that do not have a formal archive often have to find other, often ad hoc ways to maintain records and generated paperwork from work over the years. In museums that do not have a formal archive, the departments likely maintain their own records and files, both in use and not in use. Depending on the museum department and the organizational qualities of the head of department, current paperwork and personal archives can be arranged in a way that is accessible or not to outside departments, and future museum staff.

Departments in museums that keep records about objects, most likely registration or collections units, need to maintain robust organizational systems to manage art, artifact, or object files. This is why often times, registration departments are given the responsibility of maintaining the object's history information, such as deeds of gift, donor information, images, conservation, and more (Wythe 2004, 14-16). In smaller institutions that may not have the personnel or physical space to hold important object files and museum collection information, registration departments are especially critical.

This chapter outlined the definition, history, and practice of museum archives. This literature review provided a foundation for the understanding of the museum archives professional field and present day successes, challenges, and ideal future for museum archives. The next chapter describes the methodology of this thesis and how the literature review and research provided supported the development of the survey

questions. In the methods chapter, the survey process and survey questions are outlined to provide insight about the process for surveying AAM accredited museums regarding their museum archives.

Chapter 5: Methods

In this thesis, key issues concerning museum archives are examined. Questions to be investigated include best practices, management, collaboration between museum units, storage for archives, budget, various definitions of museum archival material, and issues concerning formal and informal archives. One important goal of this thesis was to supply a snapshot of practices and protocols in the area of museum archives and to offer recommendations to museums, despite budgets and limited staff support. To examine museum archives, a literature review and survey were conducted, as outlined below.

Literature Review

A literature review, presented here in chapters 2 through 4, was first conducted. Chapter 2 presents a brief history of archives and provides an understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and management of such institutions. Major sources include *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives: A How-To-Do-It Manual* (2003), written by Gregory S. Hunter, and "Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology" from the Society of American Archivists (SAA) web page. In Chapter 2, the definition of archives was examined in light of the multiple meanings of the word, *archives*. A brief history of the development of archives is also presented. Chapter 2 focuses on archives because it is important to examine the traditions of archives and how the development of archives has led to the successful collaboration with other cultural institutions, such as museums or libraries.

In Chapter 3, the relationship and collaboration between libraries, archives, and museums is examined, and a brief history of their institutions is presented. Key sources included chapters from *The Preservation Management Handbook: A 21st-Century Guide for Libraries, Archives, and Museums* (2014), written by Ross Harvey and Martha R. Mahard. Other major sources include the best practices discussed in "Beyond the Silos of the LAMs: Collaboration of Among Libraries, Archives, and Museums," by Diane M. Zorich, Günter Waibel, and Ricky Erway (2008). In Chapter 3, the relationship and collaboration between libraries, archives, and museums is discussed to highlight how integrating an archive into a museum can enhance the workflow and make material more accessible to the public.

Chapter 4 examines the definition, history, and management of museum archives. Major sources included chapters from *Museum Archives: An Introduction* (2004), edited by Deborah Wythe. Other key sources include the "Museum Archive Guidelines" and "Standards & Best Practices Resource Guide" provided by the SAA on their web page. In Chapter 4, the history and management of museum archives is outlined to understand best practices and how an archive can support the institutional history of a museum. This chapter also discusses the terms *formal* and *informal* in the context of museum archives to emphasize that although some museums may have a full-functioning archive with a storage facility, budget, and professional archivist, others may have something more basic in place, but may still apply best practices and standards to their archive.

Survey and Sample

A survey of 201 museums associated with institutional museum archives, both formal and informal, was developed as a part of this thesis after a review of the relevant literature was completed. The full survey consisted of 23 multiple choice, multiple answer, and open-ended questions. Some questions allowed for extended answers if the respondent wanted to share additional information.

Overall, the survey asked museums about museum archives. Demographic questions asked about institution type and annual budget to compare areas with specific museum archival protocols. The survey questions also asked if the institution had an archive and an archivist on staff to assess whether the museum is working to create an archival facility to manage records of enduring historical and institutional value. The survey also asked questions about what the museum defines as archival material, based on what they house in their archival collection and how individual departments within the museum manage their own records not in current use. The survey also included one question about financial support for museums archives. The survey concluded with questions about scholarly and public access of the museum archives.

The museums to be surveyed were selected by reviewing the list of institutions accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), as outlined on the "List of Accredited Museums" on the AAM web page from March, 2014 (AAM 2014). Four museums per state, including Washington, D.C., were randomly selected from the list. Also, with certain states only possessing a total of two or three accredited museums in

total, the number of surveyed museums went from the expected 204 museums down to the 201 surveyed. The March, 2014, "List of Accredited Museums" file (AAM 2014) provided by the AAM was cross-referenced with the list of accredited museums on the AAM website (AAM 2016). This website check showed that three museums that the author had randomly selected were museums that only had core documents completed for accreditation, meaning they had not been granted full accreditation status yet. Despite lack of full accreditation status, these three were included in the survey.

AAM accredited museums were selected as part of the survey because of the stringent criteria required to meet accreditation. Not only do these museums strive for excellence under the AAM standards, but they must uphold best practices and professionalism in order to maintain their accreditation. The choice to survey AAM accredited institutions was to examine if museum professionals extend their focus on exemplary collections stewardship and recordkeeping to recording, storing, and preserving archives.

The number of surveys distributed per state is listed in Table 1 below. The surveys were mailed out on February 1, 2016, in an envelope individually addressed to a museum contact or position at each institution. The return address on the envelope was the Museum Studies Department at San Francisco State University. Inside the envelope the following was included: a double-sided, twenty-three question survey; a cover letter; a typed, self-addressed return label to the same address at San Francisco State University; and one postage stamp. The cover letter included a personalized welcome, an

introduction to the author and the thesis project, as well as why the author was contacting

the particular museum. The cover letter also gave quick instructions to forward the survey

to a person in the institution that could best answer the survey questions. In the cover

letter, the last date to return the survey was listed as March 1, 2016. The cover letter is

available under Appendix 2.

Table 1. Number of Surveys Distributed per State			
State	**Number of Surveys**	**State**	**Number of Surveys**
Alabama	4	Montana	4
Alaska	4	Nebraska	4
Arizona	4	Nevada	4*
Arkansas	4	New Hampshire	4
California	4	New Jersey	4
Colorado	4	New Mexico	4
Connecticut	4	New York	4
Delaware	3*	North Carolina	4
District of Columbia	4	North Dakota	2
Florida	4	Ohio	4
Georgia	4	Oklahoma	4
Hawaii	4	Oregon	4
Idaho	4	Pennsylvania	4
Illinois	4	Rhode Island	4*
Indiana	4	South Carolina	4
Iowa	4	South Dakota	4
Kansas	4	Tennessee	4
Kentucky	4	Texas	4
Louisiana	4	Utah	4
Maine	4	Vermont	4
Maryland	4	Virginia	4
Massachusetts	4	Washington	4
Michigan	4	West Virginia	4
Minnesota	4	Wisconsin	4
Mississippi	4	Wyoming	4
Missouri	4		

*state has one museum that is an AAM Core Documents Verified Museum, not AAM Accredited Museum

Survey Questions

The survey consisted of twenty-three questions, as presented in detail below. Six key areas were examined in the questions: demographic data; basic information on archives and archivists; the institution's definition of archive materials; how individual departments manage their records not in current use; financial support; and access. All 201 museums were sent the same survey so that the information could be gathered to represent a sample of museum archives practices, standards, and areas of improvement. The survey was designed so that the results would be reflective of current trends in the museum field, how museum archives are being integrated into the museum profession today, and the future of museum archives. The full survey is available under Appendix 3.

Demographic Data

The first question in this section asked, "What best describes your organization?" This question was designed to examine if different types of museums managed archives differently. Responses that could be selected included art museum/center, history museum, general (multi-disciplinary) museum, historic house/site, natural history/anthropology museum, specialized museum, science/technology museum, children's museum, and an open-answer option to select Other and write in a museum type.

The second question asked about an institution's annual budget. Specifically, Question 2 asked, "What range best describes the museum's annual budget?" Responses that could be selected included: a.) $350,000 and under b.) $350,000–$499,999 c.) $500,000–$999,999 d.) $1,000,000–$2.9M e.) $3M–$4.9M f.) $5M–$14.9M g.) $15M and over. This question was asked to examine if different types of budgets had an impact on museum archives practice and management.

The third question focused on the role of the respondent at their organization. Question 3 asked, "What is your role in the organization?" This question was designed to identify the range of personnel involved in museum archival work. Responses that could be selected included: a.) Collections Manager b.) Registrar c.) Archivist d.) Curator e.) Records Manager f.) Other. Answer F gives the respondent the opportunity to list their job title if it differs from above options.

The fourth question asked the respondent to outline their duties. Question 4 asked, "Your duties include," which then gave the respondent the opportunity to include as many answers as necessary, as well as an option to fill in additional information. This question was asked to see identify the range of duties associated with care for and managing archives. Responses that could be selected included a.) Records management (non-object records) b.) Registration (object records) c.) Collections management d.) Archival management e.) Preventative conservation/preservation f.) Object handling g.) Library management h.) Content interpretation i.) Accession/deaccession j.) Other.

Answer J gives the respondent the opportunity to include any museum job duties not listed in above options.

Archive and Archivist Inquiry

Question 5 asked, "Does your institution have a dedicated staff archivist position?" This question was designed to assess what staff positions managed archives and to obtain a sense if museum archives were managed by archives professionals. Respondents could select Yes or No. A comments field gave the respondent the opportunity to expand on the response.

Question 6 asked, "If there is an archivist on staff, how many full-time and part-time employees have responsibilities that focus mostly on archives?" This question is exclusively directed at institutions with archivists and importantly, will supply insight into how many museums are hiring archivists, either full or part-time. Responses that could be selected included: a.) 1 staff member b.) 2-4 staff members c.) 5+ staff members d.) Does not apply to my institution.

Question 7 asked, "If there is not an archivist on staff, does anyone in the collections department manage any type of informal or formal system to organize non-object files, records, and paperwork from the institution's past to present?" This question is important for museums without archivists to answer because it asks what staff is actually responsible for completing archive-associated tasks. Responses that could be

selected included Yes, No, or Unsure. A comments field gave the respondent the opportunity to expand on the response.

Archival Material

The eighth question in the survey was designed to examine how museums define archival material. Question 8 asked, "How does your institution define archival material?" The question followed with a note stating to include as many answers that apply. Responses that could be selected included: a.) Administrative records not in current use b.) Legal records not in current use c.) Fiscal records not in current use d.) Records of research value not in current use e.) Paper f.) Electronic g.) Photographic h.) Magnetic Media i.) Other. By answering Other, respondents could choose to add any archival materials not listed in above options.

The ninth question focused on the preservation of archival material. Question 9 asked, "How does your organization preserve its archival data - is there a physical storage or collections space for keeping archived records, files, or paperwork?" This question was designed to identify the framework each institution uses to house their archival data. The question followed with a note stating to include as many answers that apply. Responses that could be selected included: a.) Archival storage b.) Collections storage c.) Library or library storage d.) Administrative offices used for record keeping e.) Specific department(s) f.) Other g.) Does not apply to my institution. Answer E gives the respondent the opportunity to list specific departments where archival data is kept.

Answer F gives the respondent the opportunity to include any storage locations not listed in above options.

The tenth question focuses on where staff are storing specific archival documents related to administration and institutional history. Question 10 asked, "Where do staff place non-object related administrative and historical documents and paperwork from meetings, lectures, policy drafts, etc.?" This question is important to ask as it focuses on the type of paperwork that is integral to archivists but may not seem necessary to keep by other staff members. Whether or not an institution has dedicated archival storage or an archivist on staff, this questions assesses how an institution is storing vital institutional history and associated documentation. The question followed with a note stating to include as many answers that apply. Responses that could be selected included:

a.) Archival storage b.) Collections storage c.) Library or library storage

d.) Administrative offices used for record keeping e.) Specific department(s) f.) Other

g.) Does not apply to my institution. Answer E gives the respondent the opportunity to list specific departments where administrative and institutional history records are kept. Answer F gives the respondent the opportunity to include any storage locations not listed in above options.

Question 11 asked, "Does the museum provide any guidelines, procedures, or protocols to do this type of archival work for any staff member?" It is important to know if museums supply guidelines, procedures, or protocols to staff because it reflects internal planning and suggests whether the museum's administration recognizes the value of

archives by providing approved information for staff. Responses that could be selected included Yes or No. A comments field gave the respondent the opportunity to expand on the response.

Question 12 asked, "If the museum provides guidelines, procedures or protocols, please indicate where these items can be found in official museum documentation." This question was designed to understand where museums that included protocols and guidelines for museum archives or archival material placed them in important documents about collections or other institutional priorities. The question followed with a note stating to include as many answers that apply. Responses that could be selected included a collections management policy, a mission statement for the archives, a statement of purpose for the archives, an archival policy, an acquisition policy, an institutional records policy, a records or procedures manual, an open-answer option to select other types of museum documentation, and does not apply to my institution.

Question 13 asked, "A museum archive may include different types of records. Are archival records such as the ones described below, collected in a formal or informal archive at your institution?" This question was designed to see what types of records museums are collecting in their archive, as well as identify what museums are managing in their archives and what kinds of material they may be not including. The question followed with a note stating to include as many answers that apply. Responses that could be selected included: a.) Organization records (administrative paperwork from all department levels) b.) Collections records (object files and records of exhibitions and

installations) c.) Acquired materials (information that supplements the museum's mission and can be applied to the collection or exhibition) d.) Other. Answer D gives the respondent the opportunity to include any types of archival records not listed in above options.

Question 14 asked, "If archival records are collected in a formal or informal museum archive, please indicate the type of archival duties and activities that are conducted." The question was designed to outline key archival tasks taking place in the museum. The types of duties listed as possible survey responses are examples of archival best practices and therefore, it is important to ask if museum are completing these duties to see how each institution manages its archival material. The question followed with a note stating to include as many answers that apply. Responses that could be selected included: a.) Accession b.) Disposal c.) An applied system of organization d.) Work with an archival budget e.) Creation of finding aids f.) Application of preservation and preventative conservation to archival material g.) Provide access to staff h.) Provide access to public i.) Apply restrictions to some materials due to privacy, security, etc. j.) Other. Answer J gives the respondent the opportunity to include any types of archival duties and activities not listed in above options.

Question 15 asked, "Is there a time frame the museum (or museum archive if there is one) upholds that expresses criteria for museum paperwork retention in regards to disposal?" This question was designed to understand specific details about an archival practice. Material retention and disposal is important to any type of archive, and if a

museum has these practices, it may indicate the quality of their archive and archival

procedures. This is especially true if museums are deciding what to keep and what to get

rid of to keep their archive manageable and focused on a specific direction. Responses

that could be selected included Yes, No, Unsure, or Does not apply to my institution.

Archival Management within Individual Departments

The sixteenth question shifts direction in the survey by focusing away from

institutional archives and specifically about individual departments managing their own

archival material, or at least paperwork not in current use. Question 16 asked, "Do

departments within the institution manage their own files or records that are not in current

use?" This question was designed to obtain specific information about how departments

manage their files and records that are not in current use, and to assess whether

departments are holding onto their records for their own access or if the records are being

managed elsewhere. This survey question has a four parts to answer based on specific

departments and the management of their records not in current use. Responses that could

be selected for the conservation, curatorial, education, and exhibition departments

included Yes, No, Unsure, or Does not apply to my institution. A comments field gave

the respondent the opportunity to expand on the response by including more museum

departments that also manage their own non-current files.

The seventeenth question also focuses on the key area of individual departments

managing their archives by asking if departments are making any non-current records

they manage accessible to other staff members. Question 17 asked, "If any departments in the museum manage their own files, records, or administrative work from that are not in current use, is there an organized system for staff members from other departments to easily access the paperwork?" This question is directed at departments that are managing their own files not in current use and how they are making them accessible to other departments. It is important to know if departments are holding onto important historical information about conservation, curatorial, education, or exhibitions, and to know if they are making them accessible to others that may need to do research. Responses that could be selected included Yes, No, or Unsure. A comments field gave the respondent the opportunity to expand on the response.

The eighteen question inquires about systems of organization that individual departments have in place. Question 18 asked, "Is there a system that the museum incorporates for access of art/artifact/object paperwork from other departments (outside of collections/registration) into registration object files?" This question is very specific to institutions that practice integrating individual department non-current files about objects with registration object files. Integrating files helps museum staff locate information about conservation treatments, education efforts, exhibition history, and curatorial affairs regarding specific objects. Responses that could be selected included Yes, No, or Unsure.

Question 19 asked, "If there is a system for other departments outside of the collections/registration department to incorporate access of their art/artifact/object paperwork, is there a designated staff member trained to maintain this system and aid in

translation of information as materials are collected?" This question is directed towards

museums that have a system to integrate departmental paperwork into object files held by

registration. It specifically focuses on if there is a designated staff member that helps with

this system or translates how this type of organization can best be accessed. Responses

that could be selected included Yes, No, Unsure, or Does not apply to my institution.

Financial Support

The twentieth question is the only one that considers any type of financial support

for the archives. Question 20 asked, "Is there or has there ever been a budget for

maintaining records and/or archives? This could mean hiring a temporary employee or

providing time for an employee to work on archive-related project." This question was

designed to assess if museums are integrating archives, or at least, record management,

into their budgets. This question also was also asked to determine if any kind of

temporary employee was hired to help manage archives. Responses that could be selected

included Yes, No, or Unsure. A comments field gave the respondent the opportunity to

expand on the response.

Access

The twenty-first question asked, "Is any form of access available to museum

archives, records, and/or files for scholarly work or educational purposes?" This question

was asked to find out if the institution is making their archives and similar material

available for scholarly work or educational purposes. It is important to know what kinds

of access museums are providing to archival materials. Responses that could be selected

included Yes, No, or Unsure.

The twenty-second question also asks about public access to museum archives.

Question 22 asked, "If access is available, what kind of registration process or security

measures are taken when the public accesses these archives?" This question was designed

to examine practice during public visits. A comments field gave the respondent the

opportunity to expand on the response.

The twenty-third question is the last question in the survey and focuses on

institutions that do not provide access to their museum archives. Question 23 asked, "If

there is no access, why is this the case?" This question was asked because it is important

to know why a museum might not be providing public access to the archive. A comments

field gave the respondent the opportunity to expand on the response.

Overall Process

The literature review and survey were designed to analyze in depth the practices

of museums today in regards to management and organization of their own institutional

archive material and records. The literature review outlined best practices, standards,

definitions, and histories for the development of traditional archives to place current

actions taken in museum archives in perspective. The survey was designed to provide a

broad view of present day practice in museum archives and how AAM accredited

museums managed their archives. This snapshot of the practices and management of museum archives today will help to understand what museums of all types, budgets, and staff sizes are doing to ensure, to maintain, and enhance the value of their institutional archival materials, as well as to improve access for staff and the public.

Chapter 6: Results

In this chapter, the results of the survey, which was conducted to obtain a snapshot of archival practice in museums accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), are presented. As outlined in the last chapter, the survey consisted of 23 questions, most of which allowed respondents to write in additional information. Overall, the survey was designed to elicit information on current trends in museum archives and to delineate the practices and standards museums are currently employing in managing their institutional archives.

Survey Results

The results from the survey are based on the 23 questions that asked AAM accredited institutions about their museum archives. The questions asked for demographic information including how many archivists are on staff, how the museum defines archival material, and where the archives are stored. The questions also asked about current practices, institutional guidelines for managing archives, how individual departments manage their records not of current use, the financial support for the archives, and public and scholarly access to archival material.

The surveys were mailed out with a cover letter on February 1, 2016 and according to the cover letter, respondents were given until March 1, 2016 to return the survey. There was a self-addressed label and a single stamp included with the survey and

cover letter, which was provided with the hopes of an increased return rate. Surveys were accepted until March 15, 2016.

Of the 201 museums surveyed, 108 museums responded, resulting in a very high response rate of 53.7% (Table 2). The response rate suggests that the survey results will provide a snapshot of current practice in museum archives and that there is much interest in the topic of archives management in the American museum community. In addition, the response rate suggests that a unique opportunity exists to understand the basic features, current practices, and actions taken in the museum professional field with respect to their institutional archives. Below, the results of each question are outlined in detail.

Table 2. Survey Response Rate		
Number of Surveys	**Number of Survey Participants**	**Survey Response Rate**
201	108	53.7%

Demographic Data

Question 1 asked, "What best describes your organization?" As shown in Table 3 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 42 described their organization as an art museum/center (34.4%), 24 museums described their organization as a history museum (19.7%), 16 museums described their organization as a natural history/anthropology museum (13.1%), 14 institutions described their organization as a historic house/site (11.5%), 10 institutions described their organization as other (8.2%), 7 museums described their organization as a general (multi-disciplinary) museum (5.7%), 5

museums described their organization as a science/technology museum (4.1%), 3

museums described their organization as a specialized museum (2.5%), and 1 museum

described their organization as a children's museum (.8%). Of the 10 institutions that

selected "other" for their response for Question 1, 4 respondents specified historical

society, 1 specified national historic site, 1 specified Native American art and history, 1

specified outdoor/living history, 1 specified paleontological, 1 specified natural

history/anthropology museum with a planetarium and observatory, and 1 specified

encyclopedic museum. Twelve of the institutions selected two responses for Question 1

and 1 institution selected three responses.

Table 3. Types of Organizations		
Response	**Number**	**Percentage**
Art museum/center	42	34.4%
History museum	24	19.7%
General (multi-disciplinary)	7	5.7%
Historic House/Site	14	11.5%
Natural history/anthropology museum	16	13.1%
Specialized museum	3	2.5%
Science/technology museum	5	4.1%
Children's museum	1	.8%
Other	10	8.2%

Question 2 asked, "What range best describes the museum's annual budget?" As

shown in Table 4 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 3 museums

have an annual budget of $350,000 and under (2.8%), 9 museums have an annual budget

of $350,000 to $499,999 (8.3%), 7 museums have an annual budget of $500,000 to

$999,999 (6.5%), 23 museums have an annual budget of $1,000,000 to $2.9 million

(21.3%), 9 museums have an annual budget of $3 million to $4.9 million (8.3%), 18

museums have an annual budget of $5 million to $14.9 million (16.7%), and 18 museums

have an annual budget of $15 million and over (16.7%). There were 21 institutions that

did not answer Question 2 (19.4%).

Table 4. Museum Annual Budget		
Response	Number	Percentage
$350,000 and under	3	2.8%
$350,000–$499,999	9	8.3%
$500,000–$999,999	7	6.5%
$1,000,000–$2.9M	23	21.3%
$3M–$4.9M	9	8.3%
$5M–$14.9M	18	16.7%
$15M and over	18	16.7%
Did not answer question	21	19.4%

Question 3 asked, "What is your role in the organization?" Respondents could

select more than one answer. As shown in Table 5 below, of the 108 institutions that

responded to the survey, 36 respondents described their role as a collections manager

(19.1%), 35 respondents described their role as a registrar (18.6%), 51 respondents

described their role as an archivist (27.1%), 19 respondents described their role as a

curator (10.1%), 18 respondents described their role as a records manager (9.6%), and 29

respondents described their role as other (15.4%). Of those 29 respondents that described

their role as "other," 14 specified various degrees of librarian-type positions, 1 specified a

system analyst, 1 specified a preparator, 1 specified a database manager, 1 specified an

acting director, 1 specified a director of education, 1 specified an administrative assistant, 1 specified an administrator, 1 specified a curatorial assistant, 1 specified an executive director, 1 specified a historian, 1 specified a digital curator, 1 specified a publications designer, 1 specified a supervisory archivist, 1 specified exhibits manager, and 1 specified an assistant curator. In Question 3, as mentioned above, respondents were given the opportunity to select all answers that apply, which provided for an increase of total responses for this question.

Table 5. Role in the Organization		
Response	Number	Percentage
Collections Manager	36	19.1%
Registrar	35	18.6%
Archivist	51	27.1%
Curator	19	10.1%
Records Manager	18	9.6%
Other	29	15.4%

Question 4 asked the respondent, "Your duties include," with opportunity to answer as many duties that apply to their position in the museum. As shown in Table 6 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 69 respondents described records management as one of their duties (11.7%), 55 respondents described registration as one of their duties (9.7%), 64 respondents described collections management as one of their duties (11.4%), 82 respondents described archival management as one of their duties (13.9%), 66 respondents described preventative conservation/preservation as one of their duties (11.4%), 64 respondents described object handling as one of their duties (11.3%),

46 respondents described library management as one of their duties (7.8%), 36

respondents described content interpretation as one of their duties (5.9%), 74 respondents

described accession/deaccession as one of their duties (12.8%), 23 respondents described

other as one of their duties (4%), and 1 respondent did not answer Question 4 (.2%). Of

the 23 respondents that described "other" as one of their organizational duties, the

answers varied from exhibition related duties, rights and reproduction, database

management, incoming and outgoing loans, disaster preparation and response, and

various types of research.

Table 6. Respondent's Organizational Duties		
Response	Number	Percentage
Records management	69	11.7%
Registration	55	9.7%
Collection management	64	11.4%
Archival management	82	13.9%
Preventative conservation/preservation	66	11.4%
Object handling	64	11.3%
Library management	46	7.8%
Content interpretation	36	5.9%
Accession/deaccession	74	12.8%
Other	23	4%
Did not answer question	1	.2%

Archive and Archivist Inquiry

Question 5 asked, "Does your institution have a dedicated staff archivist

position?" As shown in Table 7 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the

survey, 43 museums indicated that they do have a dedicated staff archivist position

(39.8%), 63 museums indicated that they do not have a dedicated staff archivist position

(58.3%), and 2 museums did not answer this question in the survey (1.9%).

Table 7. Dedicated Staff Archivist Position		
Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	43	39.8%
No	63	58.3%
Did not answer question	2	1.9%

Question 6 asked, "If there is an archivist on staff, how many full-time and part-

time employees have responsibilities that focus mostly on archives?" As shown in Table

8 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 25 museums responded that

there is 1 staff member with archival responsibilities (23.1%), 19 museums responded

that there are 2-4 staff members with archival responsibilities (17.6%), and 4 museums

responded that there are 5+ staff members with archival responsibilities (3.7%). Thirty-

seven museums responded that this Question 6 does not apply to their institution (34.3%)

and 23 museums did not answer Question 6 (21.3%).

Table 8. Full-time and Part-time Staff with Archival Responsibilities		
Response	Number	Percentage
1 staff member	25	23.1%
2-4 staff members	19	17.6%
5+ staff members	4	3.7%
Does not apply to my institution	37	34.3%
Did not answer question	23	21.3%

Question 7 asked, "If there is not an archivist on staff, does anyone in the collections department manage any type of informal or formal system to organize non-object files, records, and paperwork from the institution's past to present?" As shown in Table 9 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 56 museums stated that they do have a collections department staff member manage and organize institutional records (51.9%), 7 museums stated that they do not have a collections department staff member manage and organize institutional records (6.5%), and 2 museums were unsure if they had a staff member that did this type of work (1.9%). Of the 108 institutions, 43 museums did not answer Question 7 (39.8%).

Table 9. Management of Institutional Records by Collections Department Staff Member		
Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	56	51.9%
No	7	6.5%
Unsure	2	1.9%
Did not answer question	43	39.8%

Archival Material

Question 8 asked, "How does your institution define archival material?" Respondents could select more than one answer. As shown in Table 10 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 76 museums stated that their institution defines administrative records not in current use as archival material (12.7%), 58 museums stated that their institution defines legal records not in current use as archival material (9.7%),

54 museums stated that their institution defines fiscal records not in current use as archival material (9%), 88 museums stated that their institution defines records of research value that are not in current use as archival material (14.7%), 85 museums stated that their institution defines paper material as archival material (14.2%), 69 museums stated that their institution defines electronic material as archival material (11.5%), 93 museums stated that their institution defines photographic material as archival material (15.5%), 54 museums stated that their institution defines magnetic media as archival material (9%), and 20 museums stated that their institution defines archival material through other types of materials and records (3.3%). The institutions added 3-D objects, film, blueprints of building, audio, born-digital materials, books, study objects, personal papers of artists, publications by the institution, and ephemera to the list of other materials that they define as archival material. Out of the 108 institutions that responded to survey, 3 did not answer Question 8 (.5%).

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Table 10. Defining Archival Material		
Response	**Number**	**Percentage**
Administrative records not in current use	76	12.7%
Legal records not in current use	58	9.7%
Fiscal records not in current use	54	9%
Records of research value not in current use	88	14.7%
Paper	85	14.2%
Electronic	69	11.5%
Photographic	93	15.5%
Magnetic Media	54	9%
Other	20	3.3%
Did not answer question	3	.5%

Question 9 asked, "How does your organization preserve its archival data - is there a physical storage or collections space for keeping archived records, files, or paperwork?" Respondents could select more than one answer. As shown in Table 11 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 83 museums stated they keep their archival data in an archival storage (36.9%), 41 museums stated they keep their archival data in a collections storage (18.2%), 47 museums stated they keep their archival data in a library or library storage (20.9%), and 39 museums stated they keep their archival data in administrative offices used for record keeping (17.3%). Five museums stated they keep their archival data in specific departments (2.2%), which include curatorial, registration, and exhibitions departments as well as a state archive, 8 museums stated they keep their archival data in other locations (3.6%), which include a dedicated document storage area, vertical files, staff offices, and university archives. Of the 108

institutions that completed this survey, 1 institution answered that Question 9 does not apply to their institution (.4%) and 1 museum did not answer Question 9 (.4%).

Table 11. Storage for Archival Data		
Response	Number	Percentage
Archival storage	83	36.9%
Collections storage	41	18.2%
Library or library storage	47	20.9%
Administrative offices used for record keeping	39	17.3%
Specific department(s)	5	2.2%
Other	8	3.6%
Does not apply to my institution	1	.4%
Did not answer question	1	.4%

Question 10 asked, "Where do staff place non-object related administrative and historical documents and paperwork from meetings, lectures, policy drafts, etc.?" Respondents could select more than one answer. As shown in Table 12 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 57 museums stated they keep their institutional and administrative data in an archival storage (36.3%), 11 museums stated they keep their institutional and administrative data in a collections storage (7%), 18 museums stated they keep their institutional and administrative data in a library or library storage (11.5%), and 46 museums stated they keep their institutional and administrative data in administrative offices used for record keeping (29.3%). Nine museums stated they keep their institutional and administrative data in specific departments (5.7%), which include registration, curatorial, education, development, communications, and finance departments as well as the director's office, state archives, and university archives, and 14

museums stated they keep their institutional and administrative data in other locations (8.9%), which include digitizing and placing on museum server, off-site storage, and the basement. Of the 108 institutions that completed this survey, 1 institution answered that Question 10 does not apply to their institution (.6%) and 1 museum did not answer Question 10 (.6%).

Table 12. Storage for Non-Object Related Administrative or Institutional Data		
Response	Number	Percentage
Archival storage	57	36.3%
Collections storage	11	7%
Library or library storage	18	11.5%
Administrative offices used for record keeping	46	29.3%
Specific department(s)	9	5.7%
Other	14	8.9%
Does not apply to my institution	1	.6%
Did not answer question	1	.6%

Question 11 asked, "Does the museum provide any guidelines, procedures, or protocols to do this type of archival work for any staff member?" As shown in Table 13 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 60 museums indicated that their institution provides guidelines, procedures, or protocols for archival work (55.6%), while 48 museums indicated that their institution does not provides guidelines, procedures, or protocols for archival work (44.4%).

Table 13. Museum Guidelines, Procedures, or Protocols for Archival Work		
Response	**Number**	**Percentage**
Yes	60	55.6%
No	48	44.4%

Question 12 asked, "If the museum provides guidelines, procedures, or protocols, please indicate where these items can be found in official museum documentation." Respondents could select more than one answer. As shown in Table 14 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 46 museums find guidelines about archival work in a collections management policy (18.6%), 23 museums find guidelines about archival work in a mission statement for the archives (9.3%), 14 museums find guidelines about archival work in a statement of purpose for the archives (5.7%), 34 museums find guidelines about archival work in an archival policy (13.8%), 21 museums find guidelines about archival work in an acquisition policy (8.5%), 27 museums find guidelines about archival work in an institutional records policy (10.9%), 38 museums find guidelines about archival work in a records or procedures manual (15.4%), and 11 museums find guidelines about archival work in other museum documentation (4.5%), which includes a records and archive storage guidelines, a retention and destruction schedule, a state's records retention policy, an access policy, a disaster preparedness and recovery plan, and an employee handbook. Out of the 108 institutions that completed this survey, 16 institutions answered that Question 12 does not apply to their institution (6.5%) and 17 museums did not answer Question 12 (6.9%).

Table 14. Archive and Archival Work References in Museum Documentation		
Response	**Number**	**Percentage**
Collections management policy	46	18.6%
Mission statement for the archives	23	9.3%
Statement of purpose for the archives	14	5.7%
Archival policy	34	13.8%
Acquisition policy	21	8.5%
Institutional records policy	27	10.9%
Records or procedures manual	38	15.4%
Other	11	4.5%
Does not apply to my institution	16	6.5%
Did not answer question	17	6.9%

Question 13 asked, "A museum archive may include different types of records. Are archival records such as the ones described below, collected in a formal or informal archive at your institution?" Respondents could select more than one answer. As shown in Table 15 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 86 museums stated that their institution collects organization records in their formal or informal archive (29.8%), 96 museums stated that their institution collects collections records in their formal or informal archive (33.2%), 91 museums stated that their institution collects acquired materials in their formal or informal archive (31.5%), and 13 museums stated that their institution collects other types of records in their formal or informal archive (4.5%), which includes a variety of historical documents and ephemera, artist files, special collections materials, field expedition notes and research, records of state

agencies and local government, and digital files. Of the 108 institutions that completed this survey, 3 museums did not answer Question 13 (1%).

Table 15. Types of Records in an Archival Collection		
Response	Number	Percentage
Organization records	86	29.8%
Collections records	96	33.2%
Acquired materials	91	31.5%
Other	13	4.5%
Did not answer question	3	1%

Question 14 asked, "If archival records are collected in a formal or informal museum archive, please indicate the type of archival duties and activities that are conducted." Respondents could select more than one answer. As shown in Table 16 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 78 museums indicated that their institution's archival duties and activities include accessioning (12.1%), 61 museums indicated that their institution's archival duties and activities include disposal (9.5%), 73 museums indicated that their institution's archival duties and activities include the application of a system of organization (11.4%), 39 museums indicated that their institution's archival duties and activities include working with an archival budget (6.1%), 68 museums indicated that their institution's archival duties and activities include the creation of finding aids (10.6%), 74 museums indicated that their institution's archival duties and activities include an application of preservation and preventative conservation to archival material (11.5%), 92 museums indicated that their institution's archival duties and activities include providing access to staff (14.3%), 71 museums

indicated that their institution's archival duties and activities include providing access to the public (11%), 73 museums indicated that their institution's archival duties and activities include the application of restriction to some materials due to privacy, security, etc. (11.4%), and 8 museums indicated that their institution's archival duties and activities include other tasks (1.2%), which encompass outreach, education, digitization, description, cataloging, and creating archival exhibits. Of the 108 institutions that completed this survey, 6 museums did not answer Question 14 (.9%).

Table 16. Archival Duties and Activities in a Formal or Informal Museum Archive		
Response	Number	Percentage
Accession	78	12.1%
Disposal	61	9.5%
Applied system of organization	73	11.4%
Work with an archival budget	39	6.1%
Creation of finding aids	68	10.6%
Application of preservation and preventative conservation to archival material	74	11.5%
Provide access to staff	92	14.3%
Provide access to public	71	11%
Apply restrictions to some materials due to privacy, security, etc.	73	11.4%
Other	8	1.2%
Did not answer question	6	.9%

Question 15 asked, "Is there a time frame the museum (or museum archive if there is one) upholds that expresses criteria for museum paperwork retention in regards to disposal?" As shown in Table 17 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 50 museums stated that the museum or museum archive upholds criteria for a

time frame in regards to paperwork retention or disposal (45.9%), while 36 museums

stated that the museum or museum archive does not have criteria or a time frame in

regards to paperwork retention or disposal (33%), and 19 museums stated they were

unsure if the museum or museum archive uphold criteria or has a time frame in regards to

paperwork retention or disposal (17.4%). Of the 108 institutions that completed this

survey, 2 museums answered that Question 15 does not apply to their institution (1.8%)

and 2 museums did not answer Question 15 (1.8%).

Table 17. Museum Criteria for Paperwork Retention and Disposal		
Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	50	45.9%
No	36	33%
Unsure	19	17.4%
Does not apply to my institution	2	1.8%
Did not answer question	2	1.8%

Individual Departments - Archival Management

Question 16 asked, "Do departments within the institution manage their own files

or records that are not in current use?" Question 16 is divided into four separate questions

that provided an option for the respondent to answer each individually. Question 16

applies specifically to conservation, curatorial, education, and exhibition departments.

Not all 108 institutions answered all four parts of each question, but at least answered one

part; 4 museums did not answer Question 16 entirely.

As shown in Table 18a below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 45 museums stated that their conservation department manages their own files or records that are not in current use (42.5%), 16 museums stated that their conservation department does not manage their own files or records that are not in current use (15.1%), and 3 museums stated that they are unsure if their conservation department manages their own files or records that are not in current use (2.8%). Of the 108 institutions that completed this survey, 38 museums stated that Question 16 does not apply to their institution's conservation department (35.8%) and 4 museums did not answer this portion of Question 16 (3.8%).

Table 18a. Conservation Departments Managing Their Own Files		
Response	Number	Percentage
Conservation - Yes	45	42.5%
Conservation - No	16	15.1%
Conservation - Unsure	3	2.8%
Conservation - Does not apply	38	35.8%
Did not answer question	4	3.8%

As shown in Table 18b below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 75 museums stated that their curatorial department manages their own files or records that are not in current use (70.8%), 22 museums stated that their curatorial department does not manage their own files or records that are not in current use (20.8%), and 3 museums stated that they are unsure if their curatorial department manages their own files or records that are not in current use (2.8%). Out of the 108 institutions that completed this survey, 2 museums stated that Question 16 does not apply to their

institution's curatorial department (1.9%) and 4 museums did not answer this portion of

Question 16 (3.8%).

Table 18b. Curatorial Departments Managing Their Own Files		
Response	Number	Percentage
Curatorial - Yes	75	70.8%
Curatorial - No	22	20.8%
Curatorial - Unsure	3	2.8%
Curatorial - Does not apply	2	1.9%
Did not answer question	4	3.8%

As shown in Table 18c below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey,

57 museums stated that their education department manages their own files or records

that are not in current use (53.3%), 30 museums stated that their education department

does not manage their own files or records that are not in current use (28%), and 13

museums stated that they are unsure if their education department manages their own

files or records that are not in current use (12.1%). Of the 108 institutions that completed

this survey, 3 museums stated that Question 16 does not apply to their institution's

education department (2.8%) and 4 museums did not answer this portion of Question 16

(3.7%).

Table 18c. Education Departments Managing Their Own Files		
Response	Number	Percentage
Education - Yes	57	53.3%
Education - No	30	28%
Education - Unsure	13	12.1%
Education - Does not apply	3	2.8%
Did not answer question	4	3.7%

As shown in Table 18d below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 55 museums stated that their exhibition department manages their own files or records that are not in current use (52.9%), 34 museums stated that their exhibition department does not manage their own files or records that are not in current use (32.7%), and 6 museums stated that they are unsure if their exhibition department manages their own files or records that are not in current use (5.8%). Of the 108 institutions that completed this survey, 5 museums stated that Question 16 does not apply to their institution's exhibition department (4.8%) and 4 museums did not answer this portion of Question 16 (3.8%).

After completing the four parts of Question 16, the respondents were given the opportunity to supply any other departments that manage their own files, records, and administrative work. Some examples of what respondents listed include: finance, information technology, the director's office, development, accounting, membership, marketing, director of grants, registration, communications, facilities, central administration, gift shop, volunteers, guest services, human resources, security, and collections.

Table 18d. Exhibition Departments Managing Their Own Files		
Response	Number	Percentage
Exhibition - Yes	55	52.9%
Exhibition - No	34	32.7%
Exhibition - Unsure	6	5.8%
Exhibition - Does not apply	5	4.8%
Did not answer question	4	3.8%

Question 17 asked, "If any departments in the museum manage their own files, records, or administrative work from that are not in current use, is there an organized system for staff members from other departments to easily access the paperwork?" As shown in Table 19 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 32 museums said that their institution has an organized system for staff members to access other departments files non in current use (29.6%), 37 museums said that their institution does not have this type of system for staff members (34.3%), and 23 museums said that they were unsure if their institution has an organized system for staff members to access other departments files non in current use (21.3%). Of the 108 institutions that completed this survey, 16 museums did not answer Question 17 (14.8%).

Table 19. Accessing Individual Departments Files Not In Current Use		
Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	32	29.6%
No	37	34.3%
Unsure	23	21.3%
Did not answer question	16	14.8%

Question 18 asked, "Is there a system that the museum incorporates for access of art/artifact/object paperwork from other departments (outside of collections/registration) into registration object files?" As shown in Table 20 below, of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 26 museums stated that their institution has a system that incorporates art, artifact, and object paperwork from departments (outside of collections/registration) into registration object files (24.1%), 54 museums stated that their institution does not have a system that incorporates art, artifact, and object paperwork from departments (outside of collections/registration) into registration object files (50%), and 20 museums stated that they were unsure if their institution has a system that incorporates art, artifact, and object paperwork from departments (outside of collections/registration) into registration object files (18.5%). Of the 108 institutions that completed this survey, 8 museums did not answer Question 18 (7.4%).

Table 20. Interdepartmental Access of Art, Artifact, or Object Paperwork		
Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	26	24.1%
No	54	50%
Unsure	20	18.5%
Did not answer question	8	7.4%

Question 19 asked, "If there is a system for other departments outside of the collections/registration department to incorporate access of their art/artifact/object paperwork, is there a designated staff member trained to maintain this system and aid in translation of information as materials are collected?" As shown in Table 21 below, of

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the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 23 museums stated that there is a

designated staff members that manages interdepartmental object files, organizes the

system, and translates the collected materials (21.3%), 32 museums stated that there is

not a designated staff member that manages interdepartmental object files, organizes the

system, and translates the collected materials (29.6%), and 8 museums stated that they are

unsure if there is a designated staff member that manages interdepartmental object files,

organizes the system, and translates the collected materials (7.4%). Of the 108

institutions that completed this survey, 28 museums stated that Question 19 does not

apply to their institution (25.9%), and 17 museums did not answer Question 19 (15.7%).

Table 21. Designated Staff Member Managing Interdepartmental Object Files		
Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	23	21.3%
No	32	29.6%
Unsure	8	7.4%
Does not apply to my institution	28	25.9%
Did not answer question	17	15.7%

Financial Support

Question 20 asked, "Is there or has there ever been a budget for maintaining

records and/or archives? This could mean hiring a temporary employee or providing time

for an employee to work on archive-related project." As shown in Table 22 below, of the

108 institutions that responded to the survey, 61 museums stated that their institution, at

one time or presently, has supplied a budget to maintain records or archives, possibly

through a temporary employee or work for an archive-related project (56.5%), and 38

museums stated that their institution has not supplied a budget to maintain records or

archives in any sort of way (35.2%). Of the 108 institutions that completed this survey, 5

museums were unsure if their institution ever provided a budget to support the

maintenance of the archives (4.6%) and 4 museums did not answer Question 20 (3.7%).

Table 22. Financial Support for Museum Archives		
Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	61	56.5%
No	38	35.2%
Unsure	5	4.6%
Did not answer question	4	3.7%

Access

Question 21 asked, "Is any form of access available to museum archives, records,

and/or files for scholarly work or educational purposes?" As shown in Table 23 below, of

the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 96 museums stated that their institution

provides access to museum archives, records, or files for scholarly or educational

purposes (88.9%), and 6 museums stated that their institutions does not provide access to

museum archives, records, or files for scholarly or educational work (5.6%). Of the 108

institutions that completed this survey, 3 museums were unsure if their institution

provides access to museum archives for scholarly or educational purposes (2.8%) and 3

museums did not answer Question 21 (2.8%).

Table 23. Access to Museum Archives for Scholarly or Educational Purposes		
Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	96	88.9%
No	6	5.6%
Unsure	3	2.8%
Did not answer question	3	2.8%

Question 22 asked, "If access is available, what kind of registration process or security measures are taken when the public accesses these archives? Of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 97 museums explained their registration process or security measures for public access to archives (89.8%), and 11 museums did not answer Question 22 (10.2%). As shown in Table 24 below, common themes in responses include: researcher is required to make an appointment or request to view materials with staff, researcher is required to fill out access forms, and the research visits are supervised by staff.

Table 24. Registration and Security Process for Public Access to Museum Archives	
Response	Number
Researcher required to make appointment or request	30
Researcher required to fill out access form	24
Supervised visits by staff	57

Question 23 asked, "If there is no access, why is this the case?" Of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, 27 museums responded to why there is not public access to their museum archives, records, and files (25%), and 81 museums did not respond to Question 23 (75%). As shown in Table 25 below, common themes in

responses included: the institution has not created finding aids to access the archives, not
enough staff to support public access, and low demand from the public to access archives.
Of the 27 museums that did respond, 13 stated that Question 23 is not applicable to their
institution because they do provide access.

Table 25. Explanation of No Public Access to Museum Archives	
Response	Number
Have not created finding aids	4
Not enough staff to support public access	2
Low demand by the public	2
Not applicable to the institution	13

Overview

The results of the survey of the 108 institutions that completed the survey were
presented here. The response rate for each of the questions was fairly high with the
exception of Question 7, with 39.8% of the institutions not providing an answer. In the
next chapter, a detailed discussion about the survey results will be presented, offering an
analysis of the survey results light of the literature review.

Chapter 7: Discussion

This chapter discusses the survey results presented in Chapter 6. First, a review of the survey results provides an outline of the current practice of museum archives in the field. Next, the results of the survey in the areas of museum archive guidelines, policies, and procedures are presented, followed by a discussion of the results that emerged about museum archival storage. Next, key issues encountered by departments responsible for supporting archives are outlined. Finally, some of the likely challenges encountered in responding to the survey are outlined by evaluating several survey questions that had low response rates, or in retrospect, appear to have been worded ambiguously.

Review of the Survey Results

The survey results from the first four questions of the survey indicate the most participating museums were art or history-associated museums with a budget of $1 million to $2.9 million. Most respondents were either archivists, collections managers, or registrars, whose duties consisted of archival management, accession/deaccession, and records management. Overall, the results express that collections-oriented staff are working in areas that include the management of the archives and records. Although not surprising because the type of work collections managers and registrars are typically assigned to do aligns with the preservation and recordkeeping needs of archives, it is significant to note that collections managers and registrars are also handling the archival collections. Overall, the results indicate that archivists, collections managers, and

registrars are responsible for archival work in more established art and history museums

that possess small to medium-sized annual budgets.

The survey results from Question 5 through Question 7 also indicate that more

than half of the 108 institutions stated that they do not have a dedicated archivist on staff.

If the institution did have an archivist on staff, most had one full-time or part-time

archivist, and very few had five or more staff members with archival responsibilities. For

the museums that did not have a professional archivist on staff, a large majority of the

respondents stated that they have a collections department staff member who is

responsible for managing institutional records.

Overall, the results express that even when institutions do not have a professional

archivist on staff, they are assigning the institutional records and archive responsibilities

to at least one full-time or part-time staff member or to a staff member from the

collections department. It is important to recall from above that a majority of the

institutions that replied to the survey have a minimum budget of $1 million to $2.9

million to support archival management and responsibilities in their museum. An

adequate budget can provide more opportunities for the museum to hire an archivist or

assign archival duties to collections related employees.

The survey results from Question 8 through Question 12 indicate that a majority

of institutions define their archival material as mostly photographic and paper, including

records of research value not in current use and administrative records not in current use.

Museums are storing their archived records, files, or paperwork mostly in archival

storage, but also in the library or in library storage and collections storage. Non-object related administrative and historical documents and paperwork are stored in archival storage but also in administrative offices used for recordkeeping. A little more than half of the institutions are keeping their archival work organized and managed through guidelines, procedures, and protocols. For the museums that have archive guidelines and procedures, they can be found in important museum documentation such as a collections management policy, a records or procedures manual, and an archival policy. Overall, the results express that museums are managing their archives with best practices in mind. A majority of museums are supporting the preservation of archives with designated archival storage. Museums are also integrating archival guidelines and protocols into important museum documentation, suggesting that both staff and administration are supporting the archives by creating requirements for management of archives within their organization.

The survey results from Question 13 through 15 expressed that museums consider organization records (administrative paperwork from all department levels), collections records (object files and records of exhibitions and installations), and acquired materials (information that supplements the museum's mission and can be applied to the collection or exhibition) fairly equally when it comes to the types of records they are collecting. Some of the archival practices museums are currently focusing on include accessioning archival material, providing archives access to the staff, and the application of preservation and preventative conservation to archival material. In regards to the disposal as an important archival practice, museums today are incorporating this practice only

slightly more than museums that are not. In addition, museums are selecting different types of records to retain in their archives, which provides more available research, study, and transparency to the museum. Overall, this suggests that museums are practicing sound management of their museum archives, which also ensures their safety.

The survey results from Question 16 focused on how different departments throughout the museum are managing their own files not in current use. If the institution has a conservation department, a majority of conservators are managing their own files not of current use. A large majority of curatorial departments are managing their own files and records not of current use. A little more than half of the respondents said that the education departments in their organizations are also managing their files not of current use. Exhibition departments are also managing their own files not in current use, but unlike the other departments, in some institutions, a third of exhibition departments are not managing their files. Question 16 showed that although institutions have museum archives and staff members with archival responsibilities, conservation, curatorial, education, and exhibition departments are responsible for their own files not in current use. This is not surprising as it is important for the museum staff employees from the departments mentioned above to have access to the files that reflect their work, even if the files were created by staff in prior years.

The survey results from Question 17 through Question 19 also examine the topic of individual departments managing their records, files, and archives. With departments managing their own files not of current use, it was believed that a system that provides

access to the files for each of the departments would be in place. A little less than a third of the respondents, however, stated that there is a system at their institution that allows interdepartmental access to files. A little more than a third said they did not have system for access to files. Museums are also not finding ways to incorporate a system of access to conservation, curatorial, education, and exhibition files about objects into registration files, and therefore, they do not have a centralized location where all the information about an object can be found. The survey also indicates that museums are not providing a staff member to help translate the organizational system for access to the interdepartmental files. Overall, several departments within a museum are managing their own files not of current use, but there is currently not a system which allows for departments to access other department files for their own needs, although it is likely that museums do share their files with other departments in a very informal manner.

The survey results from Question 20 show that more than half of museums are providing budgets for maintaining records or archives by hiring a temporary employee or providing time for an employee to work on an archives-related project. Overall, museums are moving forward with regards to ensuring that their archives are being managed by creating a budget, no matter how small or for how much time, to have someone maintain records or archives. Even if a museum can only afford this temporarily, it still expresses their interest in trying to manage their archives, and therefore, it recognizes the importance that museums place on organizing files and records for the museum staff, scholars, and the public use.

The survey results from Question 21 to Question 23 captured a snapshot of the current practices regarding access to museum archives. Over three quarters of the museums surveyed stated that they are providing access to their records, files, or archives for scholarly work or educational purposes. Over three-quarters of the museums surveyed are supplying access to the public as well as providing registration and security processes for the safety and preservation of the archives. For the museums that are not providing access to the public, these institutions are explaining that this is caused by either low demand from the public, not having finding aids for the archives, or due to lack of museum staff available to supervise visits. Overall, museums are providing opportunities for the scholarly community as well as for the public to conduct research in their archives. This opens the door to a more transparent museum community where visitors are gaining insight to the institutional history and development of the museum.

Museum Archive Guidelines, Policies, and Procedures

The survey results provide a snapshot of the current practices in the field. Questions 11 and 12 focused on guidelines, policies, and procedures of museums accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). Although archival guidelines, policies, and procedures are traits of formal archives, it is also important for informal archives to have guidelines to provide an outline for the management of their archive. Of the 108 institutions that returned the survey, over half stated their museum provides guidelines, procedures, or protocols for archival work for any staff member. These

guidelines, procedures, and protocols for archival work are important when applying best practices, but the reason why over half of the museums have these significant museum documents in place may be due to possessing an adequate general budget.

Over 60% of museums that responded to the survey have a budget of $1 million or higher, likely creating more opportunities for these institutions to provide more resources to their archives. A higher budget can support a professional archivist, assistance from a larger staff, and the time to advocate for best practices, which include the incorporation of archives management within museum documentation. This is not to say that museums with smaller annual budgets cannot meet these goals; however, it is likely more of challenge to find support when finances are requiring an emphasis on other areas.

Question 12 supplemented Question 11 by asking the respondent to select which type of museum documentation features guidelines about museum archival work and responsibilities. Most museums stated that archival guidelines, procedures, and protocols are found in collections management policies, records or procedures manuals, archival policies, and institutional records policies. These significant sources of museum documentation reflect the importance of archive management within the museum. For archival guidelines to be mentioned in their own policies such as records or procedures manuals, archival policies, and institutional records policies, shows the significant amount of support for the archives from the staff as well as higher administration. With less than 7% of museums stating that archival guidelines and policies do not apply to

their institution, today's museums are integrating appropriate archival management practices into key museum documentation, expressing the importance of institutional records, files not in current use, and archives to staff.

Museum Archive Storage

Museum storage is an integral part of preservation and care of the museum collections but also is a representation of the museum's commitment to best practices and stewardship, especially for AAM accredited museums. The survey results provided feedback on how museums are currently storing archival material, including administrative and institutional data. Two separate survey questions asked where museums are housing these types of archival materials (Questions 9 and 10).

The results for Question 9 provided an important view of what the museum professional community is practicing in regards to storage. Out of the 108 museums that responded to the survey, nearly 40% of museums stated that they are using archival storage for their archived records, files, and paperwork, indicating that the museum professional community sees the importance of appropriate storage for their archival collections. It is also important to recognize that when archival material is not being stored in an exclusive archival storage, that the next site for storage is the library and library storage collections storage (a little over 20%) and collections storage (almost 20%), which is significant for the preservation and care of the collection to ensure that this material is kept safe.

Interestingly, institutions considered administrative records not in current use and records of research value not in current use to be archival material (totaling almost 30% of collected archival material), while nearly 40% of the institutions that completed the survey kept this type of material in an archival storage. In addition, at nearly 30%, museums are also storing these records in administrative offices used for recordkeeping and more than 10% can be found in the library or library storage. Only about 10% of the institutions stated that they also keep this material in other places, such as off-site storage, digitized onto a museum server, and the basement. Although it is best practices to be classifying these types of materials as archival, it is important for the future that institutions see the value of keeping them in archival storage to be arranged and managed in a more professional manner, and in an environmentally monitored space.

Management of Museum Archives

Under the management of professional archivists, opportunities increase to ensure best practices and the overall success of the archives. The survey results indicated that almost 30% of the respondents consider one or more of their job roles to be the archivist. With nearly 15% of organizational duties to be considered archival management by the 108 respondents, it seems that this snapshot of AAM accredited museums highlights the presence of the archivist, or at least staff members who are acting archivists, within the museum.

Although it is important that these job roles and duties are being fulfilled by archivists or even collections managers, registrars, librarians, and records managers, Question 5 was created to ask directly about a dedicated archivist on staff. Of the 108 museums that completed the survey, over half of the museums stated that they do not have a dedicated staff archivist. With such a high percentage of institutions lacking a dedicated staff archivist, the management of museum archives may currently need more professional guidance from organizations like the Society of American Archivists (SAA), in order to ensure proper practice.

Question 5 left the opportunity for the respondent to leave comments about their answer, any clarifications, or comments. There were many various explanations to clarify why their museum does or does not have a dedicated staff archivist, and many comments were similar to the following: position is split between library and archives; the position was not filled after the archivist retired; the position is part-time only; this falls under position with collections manager; and staff librarian acts as informal archivist. A majority of these comments explain how the respondent's institution is attempting to accomplish archival work within their budget, staff size, and all other necessary duties.

Despite the presence of a dedicated staff archivist, nearly 15% of the respondents consider archival duties to be one of their tasks. This means that other staff members, who are not necessarily designated archivists, are working to manage the formal or informal museum archive. Whether they be a registrar, collections managers, or any other collections steward in the museum, they are focusing part of their job requirements

towards archival management. An opportunity that museums need to take would be to invest in these collections staff members by providing them with professional archival training and education. This type of archival training can provide the museum with employees who can also manage an archival collection as well as the art, object, and artifact collection they are already managing. With over 60% of respondent museums possessing a $1 million annual budget or higher, it is a reasonable for a collections manager or registrar to request training in archival collections management, as it possibly is a responsibility that they may in fact already possess.

Challenges in Survey Questions

The survey questions were developed as research for the literature review was completed, so that the topic of museum archives would be investigated by asking a set of questions relevant to current museum practice. Each of the survey questions were drafted to provide a simple yet specific question for the respondent to answer to the best of their ability. AAM accredited museums were selected for the survey due to the museum's likelihood of practicing high standards, ethics, and procedures to align with their accreditation. Despite the efforts to produce easy-to-understand survey questions, and to ask institutions to provide quality and thorough answers, the survey results demonstrated that particular questions were associated with a high percentage of unanswered questions. Below, some of the issues with specific questions are discussed.

Question 7 asked, "If there is not an archivist on staff, does anyone in the collections department manage any type of informal or formal system to organize non-object files, records, and paperwork from the institution's past to present?" This question caused confusion for museums that did not employ staff who supported archival management. Out of the 108 institutions that responded to the survey, roughly half stated that they did indeed have a collections department staff member manage and organize institutional records, about 6% responded that they did not have a collections staff member who managed original records, and about 2% of museums were unsure. However, 40% of museums did not answer Question 7, indicating that this question was likely worded unclearly, or that museums simply did not know what that role was, and went on to the next question.

Several other survey questions could have been worded better or explained more thoroughly, such as Question 6, Question 17, and Question 19. In particular, Question 6 could have been redesigned to answer the question in two separate ways to indicate how many full-time and how many part-time archivists are on staff. The comments stimulated around Question 6 make it seem that museums were not sure how to calculate part-time archivists, as well as staff that work part-time as the archivist and part-time as a registrar for example. For Question 17 and Question 19, there may have been confusion once the survey began to ask questions about individual departments managing their own files not in current use. Question 17 asked if there is an organized system for staff members to access other departments paperwork. Nearly 15% of respondents did not answer this

question, and it is likely that this is the case because of the wording of the question. It may also be because departments access fellow departmental files regularly, and in not using an organized system, they skipped over this question. Question 19, which asked if there was a designated staff member that helps to translate the organized system of interdepartmental access of files, also appeared to be confusing. The goal of the question was to see if museums were employing administrative assistant-like staff members in departments to help organize materials. Simpler wording may have increased respondents to better answer the question.

Overall, although a lack of professional literature in the museum field exists about museum archives, many institutions that were lacking in budget, professional archivists, or best practices in general, were still able to answer most of the questions and provide helpful comments.

Final Comments

Several major areas of the survey were discussed above, but one important point that emerges, to be discussed below, is as follows: professional guidelines for formal and informal archives for museums are not adequate. In a formal museum archive, management integrates necessary policies, procedures, and protocols to properly run and organize the archive. The museum archival staff is often trained and educated in library science or archival studies to prepare them for collecting, preserving, and arranging materials. These materials include but are not limited to paper, electronic, photographic,

and magnetic media that focus on important institutional history or organizational information.

In an informal archive, although some of the characteristics of a formal archive may be present, the overall management of the archive is more challenging, though it may not be from the lack of work on the museum's part. Whether it is the lack of policies, best practices, a professional archivist, or support from higher administration that hinders the management and organization of the informal archive, the literature provided for the professional museum community lacks structure to guide informal archival operation, and specifically, in attempts to enhance practice.

Indeed, the literature in the field is very limited about museum archives, and what is available is almost exclusively presented by SAA. The insight about the management and best practices in museum archives developed from the archivists themselves and their professional organization, the Society of American Archivists. The professional organization of archivists opened up a new perception of archives for museums by providing all necessary management and organizational components of museum archives. Understanding the importance of well-functioning archive, the SAA paved the road for practices, guidelines, missions, and support of archives within museums. "Museum Archives Guidelines" (2016) and the "Standards & Best Practices Resource Guide" (2016) on the SAA's website provides updated policies and procedures to help structure best practices in today's museum archives. The SAA also published the *Museum*

Archives: An Introduction in 2004 and it guides the museum professional through the history, management, preservation, and future study of museum archives.

While the SAA provides important resources for archives and focuses on best practices, standards, and guidelines for proper arrangement and management of archives, the challenge is that the current museum literature does not supply guidance about how museums can develop their archives or how museums can work best within their budgets, staff size, workload, and more, especially in the context of informal archives. If professional organizations, such as the SAA or the AAM, were to present best practices and standards for museum archives, museums of all sizes and budgets would benefit from these resources that would provide expert guidance and instruction in the development and management of archives.

In the next chapter, conclusions concerning best practices in archival management will be presented, and a set of recommendations and future studies for the betterment of museum archives will be outlined.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

In this thesis, the management of formal and informal museum archives in museums accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) was examined. Museum archives, despite variation in their size, breadth, degree of formal organization, and management, include important institutional history, legacy data, administrative documents, and other significant records. These types of records are collected in a variety of formats, including paper, electronic, photographic, magnetic media, and more.

The study conducted here highlights that museum archives provide more than just storage for an archival collection; archives provide valuable institutional history and knowledge that can be used for research and for communicating with the community in a transparent manner. Despite the acknowledged need for museums to create and maintain institutional archives, little literature or best practice documents exist to guide the development and operation of such archives. As a result, few museum archives have been examined with respect to their management and preservation methods.

This thesis investigates the current management practices of museums archives through a survey which provided a diverse snapshot of museums of various sizes, budgets, and staff. As an introductory study to practices in museum archives, the work here provides an opportunity to examine the development of archival management approaches when professional guidelines are not yet in place. The results of the survey reveal how museum-wide support of archives is necessary for the development of guidelines, budgets, and policies, due to the archives' overwhelming importance in a

museum, as well as highlighting how museums can benefit from professional archival management techniques.

In this concluding chapter, a summary of the survey results is first provided. Next, four main conclusions are offered concerning archival practices in American museums today: 1) the museum community needs to develop specific museum archives guidelines to encourage the formalization of informal archives; 2) the absence of professional archivists leaves collections staff to fulfill archival roles and responsibilities; 3) few museum archives have policies that have been integrated into museum-wide policies; and 4) museums are doing their best to ensure proper handling and storage of existing archives. Finally, recommendations based on these conclusions will be presented, followed by some concluding comments.

Survey Results Summary

A survey of 201 AAM accredited museums was conducted to investigate the management of formal and informal institutional museum archives. As mentioned previously, this survey included 23 multiple choice, multiple answer, and open-ended questions with some questions allowing for extended answers. Of the 201 museums surveyed, 108 responded, providing a response rate of more than 50%.

Based on the responses, most accredited museums have someone on staff with duties concerning archives, can define what their institution considers archival material, have a designated place to store their archives, possess consensus on the types of records

to retain, and have formal policies for management and access in place. However, fewer museums have systems in place for informal archives. Nearly 60% of museums also do not have a dedicated, professional archivist, and 45% of museums stated that they did not have any guidelines, procedures, or protocols to guide archival work.

Despite the lack of professional archivists and archival guidelines, procedures, or protocols, the survey results and comments made by respondents indicate that museums are attempting to integrate best practices and management into their archives. For the institutions that do not have a professional archivist on staff, over half stated that they have a collections department staff member managing their archives. By having a collections staff member manage the archives, museums are demonstrating that they working to ensure the preservation of their archive with staff that have already successfully managed their object, art, or artifact collections, according to AAM standards. Moving forward, museums must continue to be strategic in assigning staff with professional training to manage archives in order to establish the enduring value of the archive and the museum as a place of stewardship.

In sum, the results of the survey provided a snapshot of current museum archives practices and management in the field. In regards to storage, defining archival material, and applying public and scholarly access to the archives, museums are applying the best practices as discussed in the literature. However, as discussed below, museums still need to deepen best practices and standards in certain areas, and with the support of higher administration in museums, must ensure that necessary budgets and policies are in place.

The survey results also provide insight to the challenges that museum archives are facing when their archive is not formally managed. An informal archive is often missing aspects of professional archive practices, management, and policies, and attempts need to be made to provide the archive with as many standards and guidelines as possible so that they are properly organized and function well. Because informal archives are often not funded sufficiently or not managed by a professional archivist, informal museum archives require a different approach to their management, and as a result, guidelines from professional organizations would be beneficial.

Conclusions

Conclusion #1: The museum community needs to develop specific museum archives guidelines to encourage the formalization of informal archives.

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) has provided guidelines to museums to apply to their archives with respect to what professional archivists agree is necessary for a well-functioning museum archive. From the important development of a mission statement for the archives, to the practices of arrangement, description, and preservation of records, the SAA's museum archives guidelines provide valuable and essential knowledge of best practices and management of a museum archive (SAA 2016c).

Despite the existence of these guidelines, museums are not necessarily turning to the SAA for best practices and management of their archives. In fact, even though the SAA has developed guidelines for museum archives, the museum community does not

necessarily know about them or follow them completely. While some museums have formalized their archival procedures and management by integrating professional standards and trained archivists into their museum, other museums have informal archival practices that could use the support of professional guidelines to aid in the development of their archives. The issue is especially acute in the management of informal archives.

Whether or not museums are using the resources provided by the SAA on their website or through their published works, museums could be using these guidelines to further develop their formal or informal archives, especially if these guidelines were supported by the AAM. With an approval and recognition from the AAM, museum archives of all sizes, budgets, and formalities, would be encouraged to follow SAA museum archives guidelines to improve the management of their archival collection.

Conclusion #2: The absence of professional archivists leaves collections staff to fulfill archival roles and responsibilities.

With nearly 60% of surveyed museums lacking a professional archivist, collections department staff are filling the void by completing both collections and archival roles and responsibilities. More than half of museums are turning to collections staff to support the museum archives. Although museum registrars and collections managers are well-versed in object, art, and artifact collections, and therefore, have considerable knowledge about preservation, management, and practices of collections, they may not have the training or educational background to manage an archive entirely.

Moving forward, it may be wise to integrate archival training into the education of collections staff if funds for hiring a professional archivist are not available.

Conclusion #3: Few museum archives have policies that have been integrated into museum-wide policies, the presence of which would demonstrate the support of higher administration.

Almost 45% of museums do not have guidelines, procedures, or protocols to do archival work. For those museums that do possess archival policies, nearly 20% have archival guidelines folded into their collections management policy, and fewer than 15% have a designated archival policy.

Whether archival guidelines are integrated into collections management policies or they exist as a stand-alone policy, the existence of policy is important for the development of the management of the archive. Such policy also recognizes higher administrative level involvement in archives, can ensure that the structure and organization of the archive remains robust, and that the museum possesses an organizational-wide understanding of the significance of the archive. Through policy development, staff can also come to appreciate the importance of institutional archives and why archives are vital to the history and transparency of the museum, which can support the development of an organizational culture that values the appropriate addition of materials to the archive.

Conclusion #4: Museums are doing their best to ensure proper handling and storage of existing archives.

Whether or not institutions have established archival policies, the survey results indicate that many museums, regardless of size, are doing their best to ensure proper handling and storage of existing archives. With nearly 40% of museums using designated archival storage for archival data, including non-object related administrative and historical records, museums are on the right track to the preservation of archives.

Museums are also conducting important archival duties such as applying systems of organization and the application of preservation and preventative conservation to archival material. The current snapshot of museum archives shows that many museums are applying best practices in regards to storage, despite budgets restrictions, lack of professional archivists to direct practices, or policies that outline steps for archival preservation.

Recommendations

As the need for institutional transparency grows, museum archives provide an opportunity to make the museum's history available to both the staff and the community. However, in order to meet the highest standards of preservation, practices must be standardized. Below, three recommendations are presented to help develop museum archives practices and management standards in the field.

Recommendation #1: The gap between the archive and museum communities should be diminished through collaborations between professional organizations.

The AAM outlines best practices, guidelines for excellence, standards, and ethics in different areas of the museum field. These best practices are a key requirement for accreditation. If the AAM were to provide guidelines for best practices in museum archives, this would instigate change in museums that are now doing their best to consistently provide thorough and thoughtful practices elsewhere in the museum.

If the AAM were simply to adopt the best practices and guidelines provided by the SAA, it would be a known resource for museum archives to reference, while museums work to better their institutional archives. A collaboration between the AAM and SAA, however, would provide an even stronger foundation for the support and development of museum archives, especially considering the AAM's focus on museum best practices and the SAA's ability to provide professional archival resources. Because archival collections provide resources and data about organizational history, collections records, and acquired materials, a meaningful collaboration between the AAM and the SAA could provide a comprehensive platform for preservation, care, and transparency of archives.

Recommendation #2: Collections staff should be trained when a budget does not exist to hire professional archivists.

Hiring a professional archivist can greatly increase the quality of management in any archive. Possessing professional training in preservation, management, and organization, as well as education in library science or archival studies, professional archivists can develop and implement best practices in a museum archive. Although hiring a professional archivist is ideal for archival collection care, preservation, and organization, some museums may not be able to afford to hire someone who is dedicated entirely to the archives.

One viable alternative to hiring an archivist is investing in the training or education of collections managers, registrars, curators, records managers, or librarians, so that they can manage, preserve, and organize archival collections. The survey results indicated that collections managers, registrars, librarians, curators, and records managers are already fulfilling the roles and tackling job duties of archivists. An appropriate next step would be to expand the education of these museum professionals and to expose them to archival standards more formally. Museums can send current collections managers and registrars responsible for the archival collection to archival trainings and conferences to prepare them for archival duties. By providing training to collections-oriented staff members, museums can ensure the preservation and management of their archives, so that their archives represent a well-organized and transparent repository of institutional history.

Recommendation #3: Archival policies need to be developed to create official museum-wide support.

Archival policies are not only important for the management and practices of the archive but also for the support of the archive on behalf of the staff. The support of the staff is important as their paperwork, records, and data will one day be part of the archive when the material is no longer in use. The support of the staff in regards to records management is important for the future of the archive.

The best way to win the support of the staff is to start with the support of higher administration. Endorsement of the archives on behalf of the higher administration, through the adoption of policy, highlights the role an institutional archive plays as a major staff resource, as well as creating a more transparent organization. Support from higher administrative levels can also lead to the allocation of financial resources for archives, a recognition that collections managers who have been assigned archival duties may be overworked or require additional training, and that archival collections are important to the organization, so that every department is aware of the significance of the archives and of archive management.

Finally, the development of mission statements or statements of purpose for archives, which typically involves approval by governing authorities, can add structure to the archive and to the rest of the departments in the museum by outlining why the archive exists and how they function to benefit staff and the museum's community.

Concluding Comments

As museums continue to professionalize their archives, it is clear that applying their knowledge of stewardship and management of collections to the institutional archive in their own manner will be beneficial. Museum professionals responsible for the collections, such as collections managers and registrars, are already managing museum archives with approaches derived from the preservation, storage, and basic policies that they use to manage object, art, and artifact collections. However, not all museums have budget lines, professional archivists on staff, or mission statements for their archives. The challenges of financial support, integration of archival collections management into policies, and the lack of professional management or trained staff to aid with managing the archive are real. In particular, informal museum archives need structure and support to reach their potential.

The literature review and survey results highlight the successes as well as room for growth in the management of museum archives. While the survey questions asked if museum policies and procedures included guidelines for museum archival work in institutions, this thesis did not examine what museum policies *actually stated* about their museum archives.

As museum archives best practices and standards continue to enter the field through literature and resources from professional organizations such as the SAA and the AAM, it would be wise to reexamine actual policies in a more detailed manner. An interesting focus would be to research and interview museums that have archival policies

folded into their collections management policies versus museums that have stand-alone archival policies. Often, museums that have stand-alone archival policies have supportive higher administration. Analyzing museums with these types of policies could provide insight to the advantages of archival policies folded into collections management policies versus stand-alone archival policies, and could highlight important differences found within archival preservation, storage, and management practices.

No matter what the type of policy, museum archives provide an opportunity to preserve organizational, collections-related, and acquired material records of substantial value that can be used to understand institutional history and to support transparency. In order to preserve and care for archival collections, best practices, standards, and ethics established by professional organizations provide ways to manage and organize museum archives. As the museum field has professionalized, the development of best practices has supported the development of ethical management practices and accreditation; however, without best practices for museum archives in place, ways of managing institutional archives remain frustratingly open to interpretation.

The management of an archive for access, and following practices provided by professional archivists, is vital, so that as much information as possible can be shared from archives. As museum archives continue to become a topic of conversation among museum professionals, and literature becomes more readily available, best practices for museum archives will surface. Until then, museum staff that support and are responsible for the archive need to treat the archival collection with preservation in mind, and to

support access by staff, scholars, and the public. In the end, as an internal source for research about institutional history, museum collections, and more, museum archives are an integral part to the proper functioning and transparency of a museum, and their management will benefit from a careful consideration of best practices, professional guidance, and preservation standards.

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Appendix 1: List of Surveyed Museums

Museum	State
Anniston Museum of Natural History	AL
Birmingham Museum of Art	AL
Huntsville Museum of Art	AL
Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Arts at Auburn University	AL
Alaska State Museum - Sheldon Jackson Museum	AK
Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository	AK
Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center	AK
University of Alaska Museum of the North	AK
Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona	AZ
Desert Botanical Garden	AZ
Phoenix Art Museum	AZ
Arizona Historical Society Museum, Southern Arizona Division - Downtown History Museum	AZ
The Arkansas Arts Center	AR
Arkansas State University Museum	AR
Historic Arkansas Museum	AR
Old State House Museum	AR
Los Angeles County Museum of Art	CA
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art	CA
J. Paul Getty Museum	CA
San Diego Museum of Man	CA
Denver Art Museum	CO
Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum	CO
History Colorado	CO
Denver Museum of Nature and Science	CO
Litchfield Historical Society Museum	CT
The Mark Twain House & Museum	CT
New Britain Museum of American Art	CT
Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University	CT
Delaware Art Museum	DE
The Hagley Museum and Library	DE
Winterthur Museum and Country Estate	DE
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum	DC

Woodrow Wilson House, National Trust for Historic Preservation	DC
National Museum of the U.S. Navy	DC
National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution	DC
Bonnet House Museum & Gardens	FL
Florida Museum of Natural History	FL
Florida State University of Fine Arts	FL
Museum of Fine Arts of St. Petersburg	FL
High Museum of Art	GA
Old Governor's Mansion	GA
Museum of Aviation	GA
Andersonville National Historic Site	GA
Bernice P. Bishop Museum	HI
Hawaiian Mission Houses Historic Site and Archives	HI
Iolani Palace	HI
Honolulu Museum of Art	HI
Boise Art Museum	ID
Idaho Museum of Natural History, Idaho State University	ID
Idaho State Historical Museum	ID
The Herrett Center for Arts and Science, College of Southern Idaho	ID
Field Museum of Natural History	IL
Museum of Contemporary Art	IL
Illinois State Museum	IL
Glessner House Museum: A National Historic Landmark	IL
Children's Museum of Indianapolis	IN
Indiana University Art Museum	IN
Evansville Museum of Arts, History and Science	IN
Indianapolis Museum of Art	IN
Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science	IA
Grout Museum of History and Science	IA
Museum of Art, University of Iowa	IA
National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library	IA
Kansas Museum of History	KS
Wichita Art Museum	KS
Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas	KS
Old Cowtown Museum	KS
Historic Locust Grove	KY

Kentucky Historical Society	KY
Speed Art Museum	KY
University of Kentucky Art Museum	KY
Historic New Orleans Collection	LA
Louisiana Art and Science Museum	LA
Louisiana Old State Capitol, Center for Political and Governmental History	LA
Louisiana State Museum - The Old U.S. Mint	LA
Brick Store Museum	ME
Maine State Museum	ME
Portland Museum of Art	ME
Bowdoin College Museum of Art	ME
Baltimore Museum of Art	MD
The Walters Art Museum	MD
National Museum of Civil War Medicine	MD
The Jewish Museum of Maryland	MD
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston	MA
Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology	MA
National Heritage Museum - Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library	MA
Museum of Science	MA
Detroit Institute of Arts	MI
Frankenmuth Historical Association Museum	MI
Grand Rapids Art Museum	MI
The University of Michigan Museum of Art	MI
Science Museum of Minnesota	MN
Walker Art Center	MN
Charles A. Lindbergh House	MN
Minnesota History Center	MN
Mississippi Museum of Natural Science	MS
Walter Anderson Museum of Art	MS
Grand Village of Natchez Indians	MS
Lauren Rogers Museum of Art	MS
St. Louis Art Museum	MO
St. Louis Science Center	MO
Missouri History Museum	MO
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art	MO
Museum of the Rockies, Montana State University	MT

Historical Museum at Fort Missoula	MT
Missoula Art Museum	MT
Western Heritage Center	MT
Hastings Museum of Natural and Cultural History	NE
International Quilt Study Center and Museum	NE
Nebraska History Museum, Nebraska State Historical Society	NE
Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer	NE
Las Vegas Natural History Museum	NV
Museum of the Nevada Historical Society	NV
Nevada Museum of Art	NV
Nevada State Museum and Historical Society	NV
Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College	NH
New Hampshire Historical Society	NH
Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, NPS	NH
The Currier Museum of Art	NH
Princeton University Art Museum	NJ
Museum of American Glass	NJ
New Jersey State Museum	NJ
The Newark Museum	NJ
Georgia O'Keeffe Museum	NM
Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, University of New Mexico	NM
National Museum of Nuclear Science and History	NM
Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian	NM
The Frick Collection	NY
Brooklyn Museum	NY
Metropolitan Museum of Art	NY
Museum of Modern Art	NY
Old Salem Museums and Gardens	NC
Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium	NC
North Carolina Museum of History	NC
North Carolina Museum of Art	NC
Plains Art Museum	ND
North Dakota Heritage Center and State Museum, State Historical Society of North Dakota	ND
The Cleveland Museum of Natural History	OH
Toledo Museum of Art	OH

National Museum of the United States Air Force	OH
Cleveland Museum of Art	OH
Oklahoma City National Memorial Museum	OK
Museum of the Great Plains	OK
Science Museum Oklahoma	OK
Philbrook Museum of Art	OK
Columbia River Maritime Museum	OR
Portland Art Museum	OR
Oregon Historical Society Museum	OR
The High Desert Museum	OR
Philadelphia Museum of Art	PA
The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University	PA
Carnegie Museum of Art	PA
University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology	PA
International Tennis Hall of Fame and Museum	RI
Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design	RI
Newport Art Museum and Art Association	RI
Slater Mill Historic Site	RI
The Charleston Museum	SC
Columbia Museum of Art	SC
Fort Sumter National Monument, NPS	SC
Gibbes Museum of Art	SC
Mammoth Site of Hot Springs	SD
National Music Museum	SD
South Dakota Art Museum	SD
Washington Pavilion of Arts and Science	SD
Children's Museum of Memphis	TN
Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum	TN
National Civil Rights Museum	TN
Tennessee State Museum	TN
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston	TX
U.S. Army Medical Department Museum	TX
Contemporary Arts Museum Houston	TX
San Antonio Museum of Art	TX
Utah Museum of Fine Arts	UT
Utah Museum of Natural History	UT

Utah State University Eastern Prehistoric Museum	UT
Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State University	UT
Middlebury College Museum of Art	VT
American Museum of Fly Fishing	VT
The Bennington Museum	VT
Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium	VT
Chrysler Museum	VA
The Mariners' Museum	VA
National Museum of the Marine Corps	VA
Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Museum	VA
The Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, University of Washington	WA
Frye Art Museum	WA
Museum of Flight	WA
Seattle Art Museum	WA
Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences of West Virginia	WV
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, NPS	WV
Huntington Museum of Art	WV
Museums of Oglebay Institute	WV
Milwaukee Art Museum	WI
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art	WI
Wisconsin Maritime Museum	WI
Wisconsin Veterans Museum	WI
Wyoming State Museum	WY
National Museum of Wildlife Art	WY
Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum	WY
Buffalo Bill Center of the West	WY

Appendix 2: Survey Cover Letter

February 1, 2016

Dear _____:

My name is Alyssa Torres and I am conducting a project on museum archives. The information gathered will be used to analyze museum management and practice concerning museum archives and to offer recommendations on how to incorporate policy and procedure into archiving important institutional history, data, and records. I am hoping that I might have approximately ten minutes of your time to complete the enclosed survey.

The data collected from this interview will be used for the completion of a Master of Arts degree in Museum Studies at San Francisco State University. You have been contacted because your institution is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, and because you are an expert in museum registration, recordkeeping, and archives. If you agree to complete the survey, please understand that any information provided by you may appear in the final written thesis. However, note that you need not supply any information on the response that links your museum to the survey.

If you are not the most appropriate person in the museum to answer the survey, it would be most appreciated if you would forward it along to someone in the museum who can respond. A self-addressed label and stamp are enclosed. I would greatly appreciate the return of the survey by March 1, 2016.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this project, please contact my research advisor, Professor Edward Luby at emluby@sfsu.edu. The title of my thesis is Integrating Informal Department Archives into a Formal Museum Archival Collection & Storage.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Alyssa Torres

Appendix 3: Museum Archives Survey

1. What best describes your organization?
   a. Art museum/center
   b. History museum
   c. General (multi-disciplinary)
   d. Historic house/site
   e. Natural history/anthropology museum
   f. Specialized museum
   g. Science/technology
   h. Children's museum
   i. Other. Please give museum type: _____

2. What range best describes the museum's annual budget?
   a. $350,000 and under
   b. $350,000–$499,999
   c. $500,000–$999,999
   d. $1,000,000–$2.9M
   e. $3M–$4.9M
   f. $5M–$14.9M
   g. $15M and over

3. What is your role in the organization? (Please circle all that apply.)
   a. Collections Manager
   b. Registrar
   c. Archivist
   d. Curator
   e. Records Manager
   f. Other. Please give job title: _____

4. Your duties include: (Please circle all the apply.)
   a. Records management (non-object records)
   b. Registration (object records)
   c. Collections management
   d. Archival management
   e. Preventative conservation/preservation
   f. Object handling
   g. Library management
   h. Content interpretation
   i. Accession/deaccession
   j. Other not listed above: _____

5. Does your institution have a dedicated staff archivist position?
      a. Yes   b. No
      Comments: _____

6. If there is an archivist on staff, how many full-time and part-time employees have responsibilities that focus mostly on archives?
      a. 1 staff member
      b. 2-4 staff members
      c. 5+ staff members
      d. Does not apply to my institution.

7. If there is not an archivist on staff, does anyone in the collections department manage any type of informal or formal system to organize non-object files, records, and paperwork from the institution's past to present?
      a. Yes   b. No   c. Unsure
      Comments: _____

8. How does your institution define archival material? (Please circle all that apply.)
      a. Administrative records not in current use.
      b. Legal records not in current use.
      c. Fiscal records not in current use.
      d. Records of research value not in current use.
      e. Paper
      f. Electronic
      g. Photographic
      h. Magnetic Media
      i. Other: _____

9. How does your organization preserve its archival data - is there a physical storage or collections space for keeping archived records, files, or paperwork?
      a. Archival storage
      b. Collections storage
      c. Library or library storage
      d. Administrative offices used for record keeping
      e. Specific department(s). Please list: _____
      f. Other. Please list: _____
      g. Does not apply to my institution.

10. Where do staff place non-object related administrative and historical documents and paperwork from meetings, lectures, policy drafts, etc.?
  a. Archival storage
  b. Collections storage
  c. Library or library storage
  d. Administrative offices used for record keeping
  e. Specific department(s). Please list: _____
  f. Other. Please list: _____
  g. Does not apply to my institution.

11. Does the museum provide any guidelines, procedures, or protocols to do this type of archival work for any staff member?
  a. Yes   b. No
  Comments: _____

12. If the museum provides guidelines, procedures or protocols, please indicate where these items can be found in official museum documentation. (Please circle all that apply.)
  a. collections management policy
  b. a mission statement for the archives
  c. a statement of purpose for the archives
  d. archival policy
  e. acquisition policy
  f. institutional records policy
  g. records or procedures manual
  h. Other. Please list: _____
  i. Does not apply to my institution.

13. A museum archive may include different types of records. Are archival records such as the ones described below, collected in a formal or informal archive at your institution? (Please circle all that apply.)
  a. Organization records (administrative paperwork from all department levels)
  b. Collections records (object files and records of exhibitions and installations)
  c. Acquired materials (information that supplements the museum's mission and can be applied to the collection or exhibition)
  d. Other. Please list: _____

14. If archival records are collected in a formal or informal museum archive, please indicate the type of archival duties and activities that are conducted. (Please circle all that apply.)

    a. Accession
    b. Disposal
    c. An applied system of organization
    d. Work with an archival budget
    e. Creation of finding aids
    f. Application of preservation and preventative conservation to archival material
    g. Provide access to staff
    h. Provide access to public
    i. Apply restrictions to some materials due to privacy, security, etc.
    j. Other. Please list: _____

15. Is there a time frame the museum (or museum archive if there is one) upholds that expresses criteria for museum paperwork retention in regards to disposal?

    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Unsure
    d. Does not apply to my institution.

16. Do departments within the institution manage their own files or records that are not in current use?

    A. Conservation
        a. Yes   b. No
        c. Unsure   d. Does not apply to my institution.
    B. Curatorial
        a. Yes   b. No
        c. Unsure   d. Does not apply to my institution.
    C. Education
        a. Yes   b. No
        c. Unsure   d. Does not apply to my institution.
    D. Exhibitions
        a. Yes   b. No
        c. Unsure   d. Does not apply to my institution.

    Please list other departments that manage their own files, records, and administrative work: _____

17. If any departments in the museum manage their own files, records, or administrative work from that are not in current use, is there an organized system for staff members from other departments to easily access the paperwork?

        a. Yes   b. No   c. Unsure

        Comments: _____

18. Is there a system that the museum incorporates for access of art/artifact/object paperwork from other departments (outside of collections/registration) into registration object files?

        a. Yes   b. No   c. Unsure

19. If there is a system for other departments outside of the collections/registration department to incorporate access of their art/artifact/object paperwork, is there a designated staff member trained to maintain this system and aid in translation of information as materials are collected?

        a. Yes   b. No   c. Unsure   d. Does not apply to my institution.

20. Is there or has there ever been a budget for maintaining records and/or archives? This could mean hiring a temporary employee or providing time for an employee to work on archive-related project.

        a. Yes   b. No   c. Unsure

        Comments: _____

21. Is any form of access available to museum archives, records, and/or files for scholarly work or educational purposes?

        a. Yes   b. No   c. Unsure

22. If access is available, what kind of registration process or security measures are taken when the public accesses these archives?

        Comments: _____

23. If there is no access, why is this the case?

        Comments: _____

Appendix 4: AAM, About Museums

Appendix 5: AAM, Characteristics of Excellence

Appendix 6: AAM, List of Accredited Museums, March 2014

A Higher Standard:
The Museum Accreditation Program

List of Accredited Museums

March 2014

AMERICAN ALLIANCE OF MUSEUMS
1575 Eye St. N.W.
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005
202/289-1818
202/289-6578 (fax)
www.aam-us.org

Appendix 7: AAM, Museums Committed to Excellence

American
Alliance of
Museums

About Us   Events   Resources   Membership   About Museums   Advocacy

Home > Accreditation Programs > Accreditation > Accredited Museums

Museums Committed to Excellence

The following institutions are part of the Continuum of Excellence. They have committed
to operating according to national standards and best practices in a variety of ways.

Use this search tool to find museums that have:

- Taken the Pledge of Excellence
- Participated in MAP (since 2002)
- Completed Core Documents Verification
- Achieved Accreditation

Search by museum name or designation. All museums on this list have taken the Pledge
of Excellence.

Want to add your museum to this list? Learn how

■ Accredited Museum ■ Core Documents Verified Museum ■ MAP Museum

▢ Accredited Museum-on probation

[_____] **Search**

▢ Search by state ▢ Accredited Museums ▢ Core Documents Verified ▢ MAP ▢
Accredited Museum on Probation

3089 institutions have taken the Pledge of Excellence

Alberta

Alberta Central Railway Museum	Wetaskiwin, AB
The Calgary Stampede Archives	Calgary, AB

Alaska

Sealaska Heritage Institute	Juneau, AK
Seward Community Library Museum ■	Seward, AK
Alaska Botanical Garden Inc	Anchorage, AK
Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository ■ ■ ■	Kodiak, AK
Carrie McLain Memorial Museum	Nome, AK
Palmer Museum of History and Art ■	Palmer, AK
Sheldon Jackson Museum ■ ■	Sitka, AK
Sheldon Museum & Cultural Center ■ ■	Haines, AK
Simon Paneak Memorial Museum ■	Anaktuvuk Pass, AK
Alaska Museum of Science & Nature ■	Anchorage, AK
Ketchikan Museums ■	Ketchikan, AK
University of Alaska Museum of the North ■ ■ ■	Fairbanks, AK
Valdez Museum & Historical Archive	Valdez, AK
Alaska State Museums ■ ■	Juneau, AK
Anchorage Museum ■ ■	Anchorage, AK
Baranov Museum ■	Kodiak, AK
Cordova Historical Museum ■	Cordova, AK
Pratt Museum - Homer Society of Natural History ■ ■ ■	Homer, AK

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Appendix 8: ALA, About ALA

ALA American Library Association

ALA   ALA Connect   Contact ALA   GiveALA   Join/Renew   Login

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Ways to Give to ALA

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About ALA

The American Library Association (ALA) is the oldest and largest library association in the world.

Founded on October 6, 1876 during the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, the mission of ALA is "to provide leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all."

ALA's Core values, key action areas and strategic directions

In June, 2015, the ALA Council adopted a new Strategic Plan for the American Library Association. Building on our long standing commitment to our mission and core values, the new plan outlines three strategic directions that will provide a sharper focus and increase our impact as an Association over the next three to five years. They are:

- Advocacy
- Information Policy
- Professional and Leadership Development

In pursuing our mission, the Association's core value statements define our deepest aspirations and how we approach our work together. They are

- Extending and expanding library services in America and around the world
- All types of libraries - academic, public, school and special
- All librarians, library staff, trustees and other individuals and groups working to improve library services
- Member service
- An open, inclusive, and collaborative environment
- Ethics, professionalism and integrity
- Excellence and innovation
- Intellectual freedom
- Social responsibility and the public good

Eight Key Action Areas, refined over time by the ALA Council as the Association's annual programmatic priorities, have defined the broad scope of our work and where we seek to have significant impact:

- Advocacy for Libraries and the Profession
- Diversity
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Equitable Access to Information and Library Services
- Intellectual Freedom
- Literacy
- Organizational Excellence
- Transforming Libraries

Within this broad framework, the new strategic directions have been identified as areas of intense focus for the next three to five years. For each of these strategic directions, there are goals that articulate the outcomes we would like to achieve and answer the question: "what would success look like?" For each direction, there are also strategies articulating how we would move toward the achievement of these goals.

For more information on the ALA Strategic Directions and Key Action Areas, see the ALA Strategic Plan. For more information on strategic planning at ALA and the detailed Advocacy, Information Policy and Professional and Leadership Development implementation plans, see ALA Strategic Planning.

Governance

ALA's activities are shaped and guided by a series of governing documents. The Association's first official document was the Charter of 1879, which was revised in 1942. ALA's Constitution and Bylaws are approved by the ALA Council and voted by the membership. The ALA Council also adopts the Association's Policies.

ALA Council is the governing body of ALA. Council determines all policies of the Association and its decisions are binding unless set aside by a majority vote by mail in which one-fourth of the members of the Association have voted.

ALA Executive Board acts for Council in the administration of established policies and programs and is the body that manages within this context the affairs of the Association, delegating management of day-to-day operation to the Association's executive director. The Executive Board makes recommendations with respect to policy and operation.

ALA president is to be the Association's chief spokesperson and to work closely with the ALA's Executive Director in identifying and promoting library issues nationwide and internationally. The ALA President is recognized as the Association's leader by its members.

Appendix 9: ALA, Tools

Appendix 10: Excerpt from *Exhibitionist*, "What, if Anything, Is A Museum?" by E. Dillenburg

What, if Anything, Is a Museum?

by Eugene Dillenburg

Eugene Dillenburg is Assistant Professor of Museum Studies and Scholar at Michigan State University. He may be contacted at dillenbu@msu.edu.

If you would like to comment on this article or others in this issue, please log on to the NAME listserv at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NAME-AAM/

Back in the 1950s a debate raged through the taxonomic world: were the lagomorphs—rabbits, hares, assorted fuzzy bunnies—a homogenous phylogenetic group with unique defining features? Or were they just a rag-tag collection of random rodents with some superficial similarity, but which really had nothing special in common? In 1957, paleontologist Albert Woods marshaled the physical evidence and concluded that Flopsy, Mopsy, and Peter did indeed constitute a coherent taxon. He published his findings in the delightfully titled paper, *What, if Anything, Is a Rabbit?*

Today, we apply this same question to museums. The term adheres to institutions representing a broad range of sizes and disciplines. Most have collections, but many do not. Some hire trained professional staff, while others are run by experienced, knowledgeable volunteers. Historic houses, interpretive centers, zoos, and aquariums are part of the family, while libraries, commercial art galleries and private collections generally are excluded.

Thanks to our expansive First Amendment and (thus far) blessed lack of licensing restrictions, anybody who wants to call themselves a museum can do so. I have seen the word attached to rock shops, roadside attractions and, in at least one instance, a restaurant. In fact, the word "museum" covers such a bewildering variety of sins that it's difficult to suss out exactly what all these diverse organizations have in common. What is it that makes us who we are? What, if anything, is a museum?

Surveying the Literature

In my museum studies courses, we take a formalist approach and seek the unique, diagnostic features which distinguish museums from all other institutions. Of course, we are not the first people to attempt this exercise. The American Association of Museums' website (2011) contains a page entitled "What is a Museum?" where we find:

- The AAM assertion that "the common denominator is making a 'unique contribution to the public by collecting, preserving, and interpreting the things of this world.'"

- The International Council on Museums declaring a museum is "a non-profit-making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment."

- The Museum and Library Services Act describing a museum as "a public or private nonprofit agency or institution organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational or aesthetic purposes, which, utilizing a professional staff, owns or utilizes tangible objects, cares for them, and exhibits them to the public on a regular basis."

- And back in the non-virtual world, the American Heritage Dictionary defines the term as "an institution for the acquisition, preservation, study and exhibition of works of artistic, historical or scientific value."

These diverse definitions can be boiled down to

Appendix 11: ICOM, Museum Definition

Appendix 12: SAA, What are Archives?

Appendix 13: SAA, Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology

Glossary search

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

HOME » PUBLICATIONS » GLOSSARY OF ARCHIVAL AND RECORDS TERMINOLOGY

A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology

Published by SAA in 2005 as one of seven volumes in the Archival Fundamentals Series II, the *Glossary*, by Richard Pierce-Moses, contains more than 2,000 defined entries, more than 600 lead-in terms, nearly 700 citations from some 280 sources, and is based primarily on archival literature in the United States and Canada.

Click here to download a PDF of the 2005 Glossary.

A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology

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Appendix 14: SAA, Museum Archives Guidelines

Appendix 15: SAA, Standards & Best Practices Resource Guide

Appendix 16: "Public Libraries, Archives, and Museums: Trends in Collaboration and Cooperation" by A. Yarrow, B. Clubb, and J.L. Draper

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
IFLA Professional Reports, No. 108

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Public Libraries, Archives and Museums: Trends in Collaboration and Cooperation

Alexandra Yarrow, Barbara Clubb and
Jennifer-Lynn Draper for the Public Libraries Section
Standing Committee