

Establishing an Archives Program

ASTR Advisory
March 11, 2016

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Overview

- Why have an Archive? Value and WP mandate
- Implications of establishing your own Archives
- Managing access and security
- Appraising records for historical value
- Protecting records from deterioration and loss



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Why have an Archive?

- Our history is a vital source of inspiration and also of education
- If we don't know what we did wrong, we can't avoid repeating mistakes
- If we don't know what we did right, we may not know what to perpetuate
- Instinctively, church officers often are secretive—but this can harm us



Archives in *Working Policy*

BA 70 10: Archives—*new provision added at 2015 AC*

5. Organizational units with **sizeable collections of records** aged fifty years or older **shall make provision** to create an historical archive, where measures can be taken for long-term preservation and for **making documents accessible** to researchers. Organizational units may **designate an Adventist tertiary institution as their historical archive**, with the agreement of the institution.

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Have clear goals and policies

- Be clear as to what you want from an archives—is it:
- To create space in the records center?
- To facilitate research on behalf of your officers to help them plan more effectively and make better decisions?
- To enable scholars and students to explore our history, remembering “that the past experiences of God’s people are not to be counted as dead facts” (Ellen White, 1903)?

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Have clear goals and policies

- Depending on your objectives, you might cooperate with an Adventist university/college library so that it becomes your archives
- Or you might create an archives in your organizational headquarters as at General Conference

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Research Center at the GC Archives



But that means you need not only secure storage, a retention schedule, and policies governing records, but *also* a dedicated space for researchers (like the ASTR Research Center, pictured), personnel to staff it, and policies governing use and access to records — can your administrative headquarters provide??

Preserving historic records

- **If you cannot create an archives, you can always send historic documents to GC Archives**
- ***Or* to the Center for Adventist Research at Andrews University**

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Center for Adventist Research (CAR), Andrews University

Photograph Database | Center for Adventist Research

Photograph Database | Center f...

www.centerforadventistresearch.org/photos/

center for adventist research



Center for Adventist Research | Photograph Database

Search

Center for Adventist Research Image Database

Photographs and other scanned images housed at the Center for Adventist Research at Andrews University.



Collections

09 January 2014

Items from our vault collections.



Educational Institutions

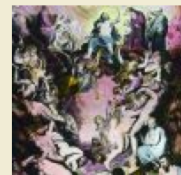
08 March 2014

Photographs taken at higher educational institutions across the world



Lantern Slides

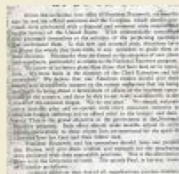
10 March 2014



Outreach Work

22 March 2014

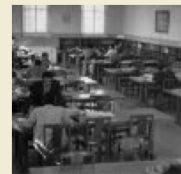
Browse our photographs by type of outreach work, such as publishing, education, medical, etc.



Photocopies

18 February 2014

Placeholders until we obtain originals.



Photographs by Decade

17 December 2013

Browse our photograph collection by decade.



Postcards

18 December 2013



Unidentified People and Places

13 December 2013

Help us identify those who are lost!

Preserving historic records

- **If you cannot create an archives, you can always send historic documents to GC Archives *or* to CAR**
- But this will mean those records are significantly far away
- Although records can be digitized and accessed remotely there are many reasons you may prefer to keep them in your territory
- Either at your headquarters or at a partner educational institution

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Wherever it is located, an Archive needs clear policies

- Whether outsourced or within your headquarters, you need to have **clear, written policies and protocols** for the Archives, just as much as for the Records Center.
- The *Records Retention Schedule* ought to specify when records of different types are to be regarded as archival and what procedures need to be followed (if any) before they are made available to external researchers.
- Vital points are **access and security**

Security

- Managing records access and security is vital
- You need to apply security controls on access to ensure the integrity of records is not compromised.
- Standards may be different for elected officials in church administrative units, faculty at our colleges or recognized scholars, postgraduate students, undergraduate students, ordinary church members, and scholars from institutions outside the denomination (or non-Adventist scholars)



If you create an archives, or designate a university or college library as your archive who will be allowed to access the documents?



Control access and use

- If you have an Archival section of your Records Center, you need **clear, written policies, voted by your Exec. Committee**, about who can see, copy and quote records and under what circumstances
- If an outside person is studying documents they need to do so in a **controlled environment**

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

What to Archive

Think of the Archive as the corporate memory.
You would want to save records:

- Portraying beginnings, changes, endings
- Dealing with cases, events, problems, projects that reveal the purpose and function of the organization
- Documenting the relationship with other denominational organizations
- Showing responses to crises and controversies



What to Archive

Definitely keep:

- Presidential and Secretariat Correspondence
- Minutes of major constitutionally mandated committees, boards, constituency meetings, corporation meetings, and strategic planning and financial committees
- Officers' reports to executive committees, boards and sessions
- And, of course, vital records ...

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Working Policy

BA 70 15: Vital Records

1. All organizations and institutions shall give special attention to the permanent preservation and security of their own vital records, such as articles of incorporation, constitutions and bylaws, minutes of boards or governing committees, property records and other legal documents, and also church properties that are of an intellectual nature, such as trademarks and copyrights.

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Working Policy

BA 70 15: Vital Records

2. The secretary of each division shall forward to the General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research a true copy of the articles of incorporation of all legal bodies within the division, the division committee minutes, and the board minutes of division institutions.

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Climate Control: General

- Paper records require a dry environment but not too dry. There is a trade-off between controlling heat and humidity.
- It is vital to stop paper records becoming damp, since they will become moldy, or simply rot; but if they are too dry, they become brittle and the paper will break easily.
- Cold helps prevent humidity but can increase brittleness.
- A little humidity is a good thing, too much a bad thing

Climate Control: General

- Staying **below** 70 F (20 C) is the target: but apart from that there are no hard and fast rules.
- The US National Archives storage temperature is 60 F: this is their ideal but it has drawbacks.
- Further, if the temperature is colder than 66 F, there is not a notably greater benefit in preservation terms, but it costs more to keep it colder and a storage area is uncomfortable to work in if it is too cold.

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Climate Control: Humidity

- Humidity is a bit of a compromise. The ideal humidity for microfilm and magnetic media is 35%, but that is too dry for paper storage (or to work in, for a prolonged period of time) and 45 or 50% will not do paper any great harm, **if** temperature and humidity are kept stable, without great fluctuations.
- Emulsion will separate from the cellulose on microfilm at about 150 F, so steam and prolonged heat will destroy the information on microfilm, as well as rotting paper.

Climate Control

- What do we do at the General Conference Archives?
- Our temperature is 66 F (19C), humidity is 50%, and we keep air constantly circulating (roughly comparable to a fan on its lowest setting).
- The air movement and temperature are to hold down or even prevent the growth of mold. The humidity keeps the paper from becoming brittle.

Records hazards—identifying and dealing with them

- **Mold and Mildew:** “sniff them out”
- **Vinegar:** a particular problem for microfilm
- **Fragile documents**
- **Torn or warped documents or images**

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Records hazards—identifying and dealing with them

- Use gentle cleaning products to get rid of mold & mildew but be aware they can spread
- Vinegarized microfilm/tape: **destroy immediately and check all surrounding boxes**
- Use archival quality tape to make repairs—be minimally invasive
- Contract with outside professionals to assist you!



Partnering with a college or university library?

- Concerned about whether an institutional archive can be trusted with your historic records, those of your unions, and their constituent units?
- Remember: the new ASTR system of accreditation!
- Separate criteria for archives as well as records centers, with levels, from “recognized” to “center of excellence”
- *Ensure* any potential partner institutions *are* accredited
- Sign clear MOUs regulating ownership, access & security

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
SECRETARIAT

Preservation Resources

- dpcalc.org
- nefcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/overview

 SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

astr

Office of
Archives, Statistics,
and Research