

## PRACTICES FOR CHAPTER ARCHIVES

### I. Practice

It is the practice of the Special Libraries Association that each chapter shall maintain archives.

### II. Purpose

The purpose of this practice is that chapter archives should contain only materials of genuine historical importance to the Association. These are of two types, evidential and informational.

### III. Procedure

Each chapter shall maintain archives. (A chapter group may elect either to maintain its own archives or to contribute materials to the chapter archives.) Since chapters and their groups are part of the Special Libraries Association, all archives are, ultimately, the property of the Association.

Chapters should treat their archival material at the highest level of professional competence.

## CONTENTS

The archives should contain only materials of genuine historical importance. These are of two types, evidential and informational. Evidential records document the life span of the organization -- its organization and development, its functions, and its activities. Informational records simply provide information; the only standard for retention of this type of record should be uniqueness.

Archives should include, therefore: non-current relevant correspondence, correspondence of chapter officers; items concerning policy or of a controversial nature; all publications, including every issue of bulletins and/or newsletters; all reports and all minutes; certain accounting records; all Chapter Awards and Citations with accompanying documentation; all compiled directories of officers and members; bylaws/governing documents; photographs; procedures manuals; and other items which might apply to specific chapters. See Records Retention Policy (Appendix II) for retention periods.

Correspondence, for archival purposes, shall not include items of only transitory interest such as thank you notes, arrangements for meetings, etc. Routine correspondence from the Association office should not be kept unless it specifically mentions the chapter/group or its officers and members, and is of an advisory, governance or instructional nature.

All references to documents within these guidelines include those in electronic and print format and should be archived accordingly.

## HOUSING OF ARCHIVES

Chapters must secure a permanent location for their archives. In the case of a chapter, this should be in a location that provides permanence, continuity and proximity to users, such as a public,

university or state library, or a library school. Under no circumstances should the permanent archives be kept in private homes or offices of chapter officers or archivists. This does not apply to chapter records retained prior to archiving.

Those chapter archives housed at the Association office are documents which relate to the overall history of the Association. Documents from chapters are integrated into and weeded from the Association's archives at the discretion of the Association archivist. Chapter materials housed in the Association archives do not preclude the necessity for separate chapter archives.

The Archivist, with consent of the chapter/group officers, may wish to retain one to five years of current materials considered the working files of the chapter, transferring older materials to the permanent archives only after a second thorough weeding process. See below for treatment of temporary and permanent archives. Appreciating that most of these pre-archival records will be in electronic format, archivists should ensure that a copy of the files is kept on a different PC or temporarily on CD/DVD.

Archival materials in electronic format, e.g. e-mails, PDFs, web pages, Web 2.0 materials, can be archived in hard copy or can be downloaded to CD or DVD until a decision is made about retaining archives on a networked server. It is an easy mistake to download much more than is required. Depending on the format of the material, significant file space may be required. Remember that the more data that is filed the more difficult it will be to access specific data without document management software. Archives should be stored in Hollinger boxes, CD/DVD binder albums or in metal or high-impact plastic filing cases/file cabinets purchased by the chapter clearly labeled as to ownership and content. Labels should give the contact information of a chapter officer to be contacted should questions arise or in case of an emergency. The name, address, and telephone number of the Association office should also be included as a contact source.

Archives housed at a given institution should be covered by a retention agreement retaining Association ownership rights to the materials, such agreement to be approved by the Association (see Attachment I). In many cases universities require the transfer of ownership of the archives to be housed on their premises. Transfer of ownership is acceptable, and is preferable to archives being housed in personal homes or offices. All agreements should be approved by HQ. In most cases the institution will have its own housing agreement, but it should include references to the following:

SLA shall not be denied reasonable access to archives to view and copy.

SLA should be given due notice if the institution housing the archives ceases to exist, and ownership should pass to SLA or their designated institution.

SLA should be notified in advance of any changes in the status of the archives. The institution does not have rights to destruction, disposal, or transfer without SLA's prior permission. SLA should be given an option to repossess if the owners want to dispose of archival documents or materials.

Before the archival documents are deposited they must be reviewed to ensure that they do not have personal references, which might contravene privacy regulations.

A copy of each such agreement will be filed with the Association Archivist so that locations of all Association archives are known to one office. The location of the chapter's archives must be reported in the Chapter Annual Report.

Should the institution housing the chapter's archives be unwilling to sign such an agreement,

the chapter must seek instructions from the Association office.

## ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

All references to documents within these guidelines include those in electronic format, which should be treated as if they were in print format and archived accordingly. This applies to web-based resources such as Wikis, blogs, Second Life, MySpace, Facebook and Flickr used by chapters. A snapshot of such resources may be archived for informational purposes, but otherwise only if they meet the evidential criteria. Although the unit web sites are backed up daily at HQ, the back up tapes should only be seen for use in an emergency situation such as the whole web site being deleted. HQ will facilitate access to the back up tapes, but access to specific web pages or groups will be time-consuming, and not immediate. It is recommended that webmasters save important web pages or the complete chapter Web site to a CD/DVD on a regular basis. Where the Web site includes archival materials copies of the CD/DVDs should be transferred to archives as appropriate. If resources on other servers such as MySpace are deemed to be archival, these will have to be saved separately and not saved as a link. Copyright issues must be considered when downloading resources from other servers.

Please note that CD/DVDs can only be used for temporary archiving, and until a networked archives database is available, the CD/DVDs must be checked for access and new copies made at least every five years.

## MICROFILMING/DIGITAL SCANNING

The cost of scanning chapter archives and saving to CD/DVD is the responsibility of the chapter. For specific information on the Association's microform conversion or digital scanning program, contact the Association Archivist at [resources@sla.org](mailto:resources@sla.org).

## ARCHIVIST

Administration of the archives may be the duty of an appointed person (Archivist) or an additional function of an elected chapter/group officer as defined by the governing documents or procedures manual of the chapter/group. Since the Archivist is responsible for collecting, selecting, sorting, arranging, and filing the archival material, it is recommended that this post be given, if possible, to a member with experience in various chapter offices who is willing to accept the responsibility on a long-term basis. The archivist should be a member of the Association, and the name reported in the Chapter Annual Report.

## RETENTION SCHEDULES

Chapter records are of two types -- permanent or temporary. All permanent records must go to the Archives. Temporary material that is to be held one or two years should normally stay with the pertinent officers or committees. Temporary material that is held five years probably should go to the Archives at the end of the second year. However, should the chapter prefer, the material may remain with the officers for the full period.

Although many chapter records are maintained on the chapter Web site this does not change

the retention policy guidelines, but will impact the archiving format.

Attachment II shows recommended retention policy. There should be little reason for chapters to deviate from this policy. The most common mistake in handling records is to keep too much. The Archivist should do a thorough weeding before adding material to the permanent file.

## TRANSFER OF MATERIALS TO ARCHIVIST

Outgoing officers and committee chairs should transfer archival materials to the Archivist at the end of their term of office.

Incoming officers and committee chairs may wish to receive files intact from their predecessors. Following timely review, they should pass the material on to the Archivist for weeding and filing.

## ORGANIZATION OF ARCHIVES

General -- (materials pertaining to the chapter as a whole)

- Chapter Bylaws/Governing Documents, including all revisions and amendments.
- History: materials pertaining to establishment and early growth of the chapter.
- Membership lists of chapter members.
- Minutes of Business Meetings.
- Obituaries.
- Photographs.
- Procedures Manual, chapter and Association.
- Publicity: clippings, pictures, etc., about the chapter or its members.

Officers --

- Roster of officers and committee members.
- Executive Board - Minutes and Reports.
- President - Annual Report and other materials of permanent importance, including correspondence not found elsewhere.
- Secretary - Materials of permanent importance, including correspondence not found elsewhere. (Minutes are filed elsewhere.)
- Treasurer or Secretary-Treasurer - A separate records retention schedule is in the Treasurers' Policy and Procedures Manual. It is also available on the SLA website under Unit Treasurer Information.
- Other Officers.

Committees -- arranged alphabetically by committee title.

Chapter Groups -- arranged the same way as the entire chapter's archives.

Projects -- Include joint conferences, educational programs, workshops, association-wide meetings, etc.

Publications -- (Archival files should contain one copy of the actual publication. Correspondence pertaining to a publication should be filed in the folder of the committee or position responsible for the publication.)

- Bulletin/Newsletter
- Membership Directory
- Others (by name)

Web-based resources – (Each CD/DVD should have an index of files copied to the CD/DVD.)

- Bulletin/Newsletter
- Schedule of programs, events, workshops, joint conferences
- Awards, scholarships
- Other resources meeting the evidential or informational criteria

Associated Organizations - Reports, correspondence from liaisons with other organizations, e.g. ALA, CLA, ASIS&T, state or provincial library associations.

## FILING OF ARCHIVES

Physical or electronic folders should be titled/labeled with a general folder/category, a subfolder/subcategory, and separate chronological folders/chapters if necessary. For example:

GENERAL - History  
GENERAL - Minutes - 1965 - 69  
OFFICERS - Rosters - 1950 - 1970  
PUBLICATIONS - Bulletins - 1971 - 75  
etc.

Within each physical folder, material should be filed chronologically, with the latest material in front.

An attempt should be made to purchase acid-free archival folders for materials of special value. Pictures also require some special handling. For additional resources for archival products and sources of information, contact the Information Center, [resources@sla.org](mailto:resources@sla.org), at the Association office. Organization is the responsibility of the chapter/group archivist.

## ARCHIVIST'S QUICK REFERENCE FILE

It is recommended that the Archivist maintain a quick reference file to be used to respond to the most frequently asked questions. Alternatively the list below should be added to the chapter Web site for general access. The following items are felt to be the most important for quick reference purposes:

1. Officers: list of elected officers and committee chairs and members for the last 10 years.
2. Programs: list of activities for the last 5 years (short-form)  
date - program title - speaker(s)

3. History: date of establishment, petition signatories, place of first meeting, other exciting events, e.g. visit by Association officer, awards to chapter members.
4. Special publications: title, date of publication.
5. Web-based documents: Documents which are only available on the chapter's website, such as Bulletins, minutes or reports should be downloaded and archived in hard copy or saved to CD/DVD in the absence of a networked unit archives database.
6. Program activities: The agenda of the program, and details on the presenters should be retained. It is up to the individual chapter whether to retain the actual presentation which may be in printed (hand-outs), electronic (e.g. Power Point® ) or audio-visual format.
7. Web sites: Although the unit web sites are backed up daily at HQ, the back up tapes should only be seen for use in an emergency situation such as the whole web site being deleted. HQ will facilitate access to the back up tapes, but access to specific web pages or groups will be time-consuming, and not immediate. It is recommended that webmasters save important web pages or the complete chapter Web site to a CD/DVD on a regular basis. Bulletins, minutes and reports. For chapters which host their own websites any information which should be archived in accordance with these guidelines and is only available on the website, should be downloaded and archived in hard copy or saved to CD/DVD.
8. Electronic records: If important documents have been archived on diskette it is recommended that the data is scanned to CD/DVD as diskette software is becoming increasingly difficult to find on PCs or laptops. The Information Center can assist in scanning, but any costs involved are the chapter's responsibility.

ATTACHMENT I

SAMPLE AGREEMENT FOR STORAGE OF SLA CHAPTER OR CHAPTER ARCHIVES

AT A GIVEN INSTITUTION

AGREEMENT BETWEEN

(Name of Institution)

and the

\_\_\_\_\_ CHAPTER or DIVISION

SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

regarding

CHAPTER OR DIVISION ARCHIVES

\_\_\_\_\_ Institution (hereinafter the INSTITUTION) agrees to provide, without charge, to the \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter or Division of the Special Libraries Association (hereinafter the CHAPTER or DIVISION) for a period of \_\_\_\_\_, space to be used to house the archives of the CHAPTER or DIVISION subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The CHAPTER or DIVISION will be responsible for providing securable physical housing for the archives. (Such housing is subject to the approval of the INSTITUTION.)
- (2) The location of the floor space will be determined by the INSTITUTION (and will be subject to change should such space be required for the INSTITUTION'S use). The CHAPTER or DIVISION retains the right to withdraw the archives from the INSTITUTION during the term of this agreement should a changed location not be approved by the CHAPTER or DIVISION.
- (3) The CHAPTER or DIVISION retains ownership of the archives and agrees to provide any additional insurance agreed by both parties as necessary to cover damage or loss of the archives.
- (4) The INSTITUTION shall not be liable for any loss or damage to the archives during the time that they are housed by the INSTITUTION, its employees or agents.

- (5) The CHAPTER or DIVISION will be responsible for the organization and maintenance of the archives and for preparation and maintenance of any access tools or finding aids necessary to service the archives.
- (6) The INSTITUTION agrees to allow in-building use of the archives to persons authorized by the CHAPTER or DIVISION to have access to the files.
- (7) The CHAPTER or DIVISION agrees to provide identification for persons authorized to have access to the archives and to provide the INSTITUTION prior notification of persons so authorized. (In addition, the CHAPTER or DIVISION agrees to provide the INSTITUTION with forms for submission to the CHAPTER or DIVISION for use by students or others seeking use of the archives.)

Both parties agree to the terms of this agreement for the \_\_\_\_\_ year period commencing \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ and ending \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. Prior to the termination date, the agreement will be reviewed by both parties and may, by mutual consent, be continued, amended or terminated. Should no notice of intent to continue, amend or terminate be given by either party by \_ (the termination date), the agreement will automatically continue under the terms of this agreement on a month-to-month basis. In the event this agreement is terminated, the CHAPTER or DIVISION agrees to remove the archives and housing from the INSTITUTION'S space within sixty (60) days after official notification of the termination to the CHAPTER or DIVISION and the Special Libraries Association in Alexandria, VA. Should the archives and housing not be removed by the CHAPTER or DIVISION or the Special Libraries Association within the stipulated time period, ownership of the archives and housing will automatically transfer to the INSTITUTION.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
 (Date) (Name) (Title) (INSTITUTION)

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
 (Date) (Name) (Title) (CHAPTER or DIVISION)

Chapter and Division Records  
Retention Policy

RECORD

RETENTION POLICY

General --

- Chapter Bylaws/Governing Documents, including all revisions and amendments  
Permanent
- History: Materials pertaining to establishment and early growth of chapter or division  
Permanent
- Membership lists of chapter or division members  
2 years\*
- Memorials and Awards: Special recognition to chapter or division or to members  
Permanent
- Minutes of Business Meetings  
Permanent
- Obituaries  
Permanent
- Photographs  
Permanent
- Procedures Manual, chapter or division and Association  
Current Edition
- Publicity: Clippings, pictures, etc., about chapter or division or its members  
Permanent
- Surveys: Survey instrument and results summary  
Permanent

Officers --

- Directory of officers and committee members  
Permanent
- Board candidate biographies  
5 years
- Executive Board - Minutes and Reports  
Permanent
- President  
Annual Report to the Association  
Permanent
- Correspondence  
To/from chapter or division members  
5 years\*\*
- To/from Association  
5 years\*\*
- To/from others  
5 years\*\*
- Reports from chapter or division Committees  
5 years
- Treasurer  
See Treasurers' Policy and Procedures Manual.  
Permanent\*\*\*
- Other Officers  
Reports and correspondence  
5 yrs. & cur.

Committees --

- Reports and correspondence  
5 years

Chapter groups or division sections --

- Reports and correspondence  
5 years

Projects - Includes joint conferences, workshops, association-wide meetings, etc.

-- Reports and correspondence	5 years
Publications --	
-- one copy of each	Permanent
-- extra copies	
Directory	Until superseded
Bulletin	5 years
Separate publications	To be determined individually

\* Keep current + 2 years for marketing purposes. You may consider contacting recently lapsed members.

\*\* Unless contains policy statements or other matters of lasting importance. If so, keep pertinent item permanently.

\*\*\* The Retention Period in the Unit Treasurers Procedures Manual is a general guide for records retention and not archiving. Where the retention period is permanent, these documents should be passed to the archivist for archiving. It is up to the individual unit treasurer to meet the retention requirements for financial documents. If the unit archivist is passed these documents for safe keeping, it must be made clear the period after which they should be destroyed.

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