

**Society of American Archivists
Council Conference Call
January 16, 2015
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm EST**

**Annual Report: Dictionary Working Group
(Prepared by Chair Rosemary Pleva Flynn)**

Roster:

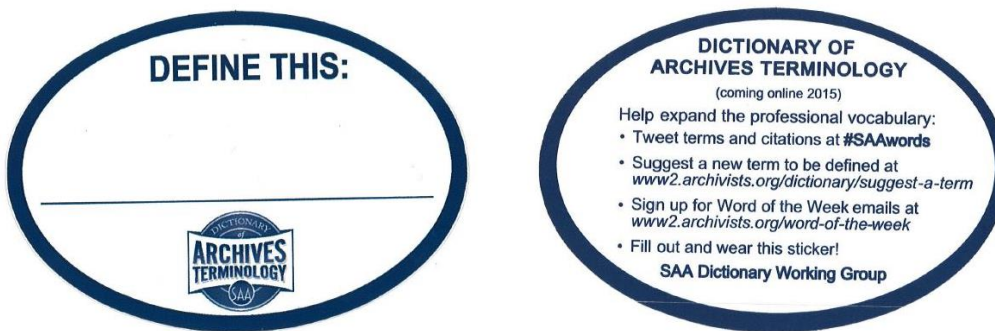
Rosemary Pleva Flynn (Chair, 2012–2016)	Margery Sly (2014–2015)
Kathryn Bowers (2014–2016)	Diane Vogt-O’Connor (2012–2014)
Tamar Chute (2013–2017)	Geoffrey Huth (Council Liaison, 2012–2015)
Kristy Darby (2012–2018)	Helen Wong Smith (Council Liaison, 2013– 2016)
Pam Hackbart-Dean (2013–2014)	Teresa Brinati (Staff)
Andrew Hyslop (2013–2017)	Matt Black (Staff)
Mary Elizabeth Ruwell (2014–2017)	
Dawn Schmitz (2013–2015)	

Overview: The Glossary Working Group formally began on August 30, 2012. The name was changed to the Dictionary Working Group in January 2014. The group’s charge is to develop and implement effective mechanisms and procedures for soliciting contributions of new content for the *Dictionary of Archives Terminology* (DAT) using the 2005 *Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* as a basis; and to develop and implement effective mechanisms and procedures to ensure periodic review and update of dictionary content as appropriate. DAT will be published online only; the projected release date is late 2015, pending acquisition and implementation of dictionary software.

Projects/Activities:

- Conference calls are convened two to three times a month. The Working Group met face-to-face in Chicago on February 13–15, 2014, and in Washington, DC, on August 12, 2014.
- Word of the Week: Debuting July 22, 2014, this weekly e-blast has been successful beyond our dreams. [Word of the Week](#) serves as a means of introducing the SAA community and beyond to new words and definitions that will be included in DAT, and to words and their definitions that are under revision. It is also a means of soliciting feedback from the archival community about specific terms. Word of the Week now has more than 800 subscribers.
- Reading Program: The working group embarked on an extensive reading program after the 2013 Annual Meeting. As we finish up with the latest issues of *The American Archivist*, we will then examine regional and Canadian archival journals. We also have been working our way through SAA books published since 2004. Additional works also have been identified.
- Subject Tags: The list of subject tags was discussed and modified at the working meeting in Chicago. All existing *Glossary* terms have been tagged with subject tags. New terms are being tagged as they are added.
- Feedback Forms: The [form](#) for new term submissions on the existing *Glossary* home page was updated to include the subject tag list and the format was modified a bit. A similar form was created to offer feedback on the Word of the Week terms.

- Outreach: “[The Words We Use](#)” by Geof Huth was posted to the *Off the Record* blog in March and was repurposed as an [article](#) in the May/June issue of *Archival Outlook*. DAT and Word of the Week were branded with bold logos in June. We are using the Twitter hashtag #SAAWords.
- 2014 Annual Meeting in Washington, DC: Hosted “The Latest Words” Breakfast Forum to raise awareness about the process for gathering terminology and vetting definitions, to address the projected timetable for production of DAT, and to answer attendee questions. Throughout the conference, handed out 300 stickers (image below) to promote DAT and solicit new terms. During an Exhibit Hall office hour, Working Group Chair Rosemary Pleva Flynn and *American Archivist* Editor Greg Hunter and Publications Board Chair Chris Prom were available for questions.



Ongoing Discussion Topics:

- Continually refining the methodology for adding terms, collecting citations, and editing entries.
- How to create a better user interface.
- Version control so that users can cite the changing digital publication accurately.
- Print version of DAT – a hot topic with some SAA members who are concerned about fixity.

Initiatives Associated with 2014-2018 Strategic Plan:

- Goal 3, Advancing the Field: In preparing DAT, the Working group is participating in the development of standardized terminology for the profession, using Word of the Week and the Annual Meeting to disseminate our research in the field, and collaborating with members (through the weekly e-blast, Twitter, and feedback forms) to enhance professional knowledge.

Concerns for Council Attention:

- Have no easy technological means of editing and writing cooperatively.
 - Much about the current Drupal version of the *Glossary* is very unwieldy, which has extended into the “sandbox” (an offline version). With no means for the group to track changes, updates, or additions, the sandbox is virtually useless as a collaborative workspace.
 - Realizing the problems with the sandbox and shortly after the 2013 Annual Meeting, we began to use Asana, online project management software, to manage our activities. This has not been without challenges, but overall it works much better than the sandbox. We continue to modify and adjust our projects in Asana as needed.
- Proper presentation of an online dictionary.
 - As the working group evaluated what is needed for both the user interface and the back-end of the dictionary, we quickly became aware that the current format of the Drupal *Glossary* is not adequate.
 - Identifying online dictionary software and budgeting for its acquisition/ implementation so DAT can debut in late 2015.