

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
August 1, 2019
Austin, Texas**

Rename Archival Innovator Award to Honor Linda J. Henry

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BACKGROUND

SAA Fellow Linda J. Henry was the quintessential archives professional. She contributed to SAA in diverse and substantive ways for 30 years, from 1977 when she first joined SAA until her retirement in 2007. Passionate about archives, Linda bequeathed \$342,405 to SAA upon her death in 2008, providing its largest unrestricted gift and the seed money that launched the SAA Foundation.

Linda spent almost 25 years of her career at the National Archives and Records Administration, first with Education Programs and later in the Electronic and Special Media Records Division. Linda was a frequent speaker and author, with her most notable works being “Schellenberg in Cyberspace” and “An Archival Retread in Electronic Records: Acquiring Computer Literacy.”

An active participant in SAA, Linda chaired the Program Committee (1977), and served on Council (1983-1986) and as Treasurer (1988-1991). Bringing her intellect and humor to everything she did, Linda was involved with numerous committees and task forces, notably the Status of Women Committee and the Task Force to Revise the SAA Constitution. For many years, she directed the Modern Archives Institute at the National Archives and taught workshops for SAA and other organizations. Linda was named a Fellow in 1987.

Linda was intellectually curious and eagerly sought out new ideas. She was dedicated to the education of archivists and encouraged all archivists to creatively seek out and learn new skills. While firmly committed to the history of archival theory, she welcomed change that would promote the understanding and use of archives both within the profession and in the greater public.

DISCUSSION

A group of Linda’s long-time colleagues have been discussing how SAA might honor her lasting impact on the archives profession and on SAA. After discussions with Nancy Beaumont, they determined that an award—particularly one that focuses on innovation in the profession—might be the best way to honor her.

The mission and purpose of SAA's existing Archival Innovator Award would seem to align with Linda's own commitment to learning and exploring the boundaries of archival theory. She both welcomed new ideas, even as she sometimes challenged them, and served as a mentor for numerous new archivists. For these reasons her colleagues recommend that the Archival Innovator Award be renamed to honor and commemorate Linda J. Henry:

Society of American Archivists
Linda J. Henry Archival Innovator Award

Purpose and Criteria for Selection:

The Archival Innovator Award recognizes an archivist, a group of archivists, a repository, or an organization that demonstrates the greatest overall current impact on the profession or their communities. The award was renamed for SAA Fellow and Past Treasurer Linda J. Henry in 2019 in honor of her long-standing commitment to the archives profession and exploring new boundaries.

Nominee(s) should meet as many of the following criteria as possible:

Creativity or innovation in approaching professional challenges;

- Demonstrated ability to think outside of professional or institutional norms;
- Ability to translate creativity, innovation, and new thinking into working solutions;
- Development of an archives program or outreach activity that has an extraordinary impact on a community; and/or
- Commitment to the advancement of professional knowledge through traditional or emerging information-sharing media.

The work should be undertaken within the past three years—it need not be completed, but it must be sufficiently advanced to demonstrate results.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Do Council members agree that it would be appropriate to honor Linda J. Henry by renaming the Archival Innovator Award?
- If not, do you have other ideas for honoring her?