

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
November 2-3, 2018
Chicago, Illinois**

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

Roster:

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| Rosemary Pleva Flynn (Chair, 2012–2020; 2012–2014, Standards Representative) | Mary Elizabeth Ruwell (2014–2021) |
| Kathryn Bowers (2016-2020; 2014–2016, Standards Representative) | Dawn Schmitz (2012 –2019) |
| Tamar Chute (2013–2021) | Margery Sly (2014–2019, Publications Representative) |
| Cliff Hight (2015–2022) | Katy Sternberger (2017–2021; Intern, 2016– 2017) |
| Geoffrey Huth (2015–2019; Council Liaison, 2012–2015) | Courtney Charier (Council Liaison, 2016– 2019) |
| Andrew Hyslop (2013–2017; assisting as has time) | Teresa Brinati (Staff) |

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 new *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.

Projects/Activities through August 2018

- Dictionary Production System (DPS): We have been learning the new system and worked with IDM on a few enhancements to better fit and work with our data and to make the user interface easier to use. Term stubs have been entered and we are in the early stages of transferring all of the entries from Asana to the DPS. We have also begun working on standardizing the bibliography entries.
- Word of the Week: This weekly e-blast continues to be wildly successful. [Word of the Week](#) introduces 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. As of the end of

July 2018, the group has released more than 200 new or revised entries through the Word of the Week email blast, which now has more than 1,400 subscribers.

- Reading Program: The reading program continues as described in the previous annual report. New works are added as they are published. Older works are sometimes mined for new information when we are looking for first instance of use.
- Outreach: Since the last annual report, we had two articles in *Archival Outlook* (one each by Kate Bowers and Geof Huth). In addition to Word of the Week, we continue using the Twitter hashtag #SAAWords, especially during the Annual Meeting.
- 2018 Joint Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.: The highlight of the Annual Meeting was a special open forum, “What Does That Mean? Building SAA’s New Dictionary.” During the session, Dawn Schmitz and Rosemary Pleva Flynn presented on how the group harvests, documents, and defines our lexicography using the word *transparency*, the Word of the Week for the conference week. Those gathered also went through an exercise and contributed to the discussion and definition for *degradation*, a future Word of the Week. During an Exhibit Hall office hour, Rosemary Pleva Flynn along with *American Archivist* Editor Cal Lee and Publications Board Chair Chris Prom were available for questions. Rosemary also participated in the Write Away Breakfast.
- With two interns coming on board in August after the Joint Annual Meeting, DWG is looking to move forward with entering the vast quantities of information gathered about the archival lexicon and getting the initial *Dictionary of Archives Terminology* online.

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.

Initiatives Associated with 2014-2018 Strategic Plan:

- Goal 1, Advocating for Archives and Archivists: Developing a clear and common language about what we do as a profession is essential to creating communication methods that serve advocacy efforts at all levels.
- Goal 2, Enhancing Professional Growth: Many archivists have mentioned to working group members that they have interacted with archival literature more frequently as they follow the citation links in the Word of the Week messages.
- 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.
- Goal 4, Meeting Members’ Needs: Defining terms in the DAT such as “community archives” and “Protocols for Native American Archival Materials” to name a few, highlights our efforts to diversify the documentation and understanding of the archival lexicon and making it available to the profession as a whole.

Conference Calls

Conference calls are convened almost weekly. During the calls, we discuss current terms for Word of the Week, we have been doing training and Q&A on the DPS, and we also added video conferencing capabilities with the addition of Adobe Connect access through SAA. The Working Group met face-to-face in Washington, D.C., in August 2018 at the Joint Annual Meeting.