

Archivists of Religious Collections Section

By-Laws

(Adopted in 1983; amended in 1986, 1989, 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2001, 2004)

I. Membership

Membership in the Archivists of Religious Collections Section (the Section) of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) is open to any member of the Society with an interest in the records, archives, or historical collections of churches, synagogues, and other religious institutions, religious congregations, and agencies.

II. Objectives

1. To provide a forum for the discussion of religious archival matters;
2. To identify, discuss, and resolve areas of mutual concern and new developments in the areas of religious archives;
3. To encourage and provide communication among Section members and with the Society in general;
4. To serve as an advocate for religious archival interests;
5. To carry out specific functions which have been assigned to the Section in general or to committees or individuals;
6. To integrate new members in the field and to develop leadership in the Section as well as in the Society itself;
7. To recommend to Council actions or positions the Section feels appropriate for the entire Society; and
8. To suggest programs and speakers as well as other activities appropriate for the SAA annual meetings.

III. Officers

- A. The officers of the Section shall be the Chair, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, Immediate Past Chair, and Secretary.
- B. Only members of the Society of American Archivists and of this Section may serve as officers. The Society maintains the list of Section members. The term of office shall be two years. Only the Secretary shall be eligible for reelection.
- C. Biennially, there shall be elected a Vice Chair/Chair Elect who shall succeed the Chair upon completion of the Chair's two year term and who shall preside in the Chair's absence or inability to serve.
- D. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Section and of its Steering Committee. In addition, the Chair shall also serve as liaison with the SAA in general, its Council and other Sections, shall appoint committees as the need arises, and shall render reports to the Section membership, the Council, and the SAA membership on such matters as deemed pertinent or identified by the officers and the Steering Committee.
- E. The Secretary shall record the proceedings of the annual meeting, prepare minutes of Steering Committee meetings, and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Chair. In the absence of a duly elected Secretary, the Chair shall appoint a replacement for the annual meeting.
- F. The Immediate Past Chair shall either serve as Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee or appoint a Section member to serve as Chair, and shall assume such responsibilities as may be assigned by the Section Chair.

G. Should any elected officer or board member be unable to complete a term of office, a special election shall be held to fill the vacancy.

IV. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee shall consist of the elected officers, chairs of the standing committees, and two other members elected by the Section; these two members must be members of the Section and will serve terms of two years on a rotating basis. The Steering Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Chair, and its members may be assigned specific responsibilities by the Chair. The annual meeting of the Section shall be planned by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall appoint a Section member or members to be editor of the Sections's newsletter. The Steering Committee shall review and evaluate the newsletter at each annual meeting.

V. Standing Committees

A. The Chair and/or the Steering Committee may appoint committees as needed, and shall define the role of any committee. Only members of the Society of American Archivists and the Section may be appointed committee members. Committees shall report to the annual meeting.

B. In the event that a special committee discovers that its task has extended beyond the bounds of Section authority or that it will require a separate budget to carry out its assignments, the committee shall report this to the annual meeting of the Section with the request that the Section approve the formation of a separate task force. The Section may then recommend to the SAA Council that such a task force be formed.

VI. Election of Officers

A. There shall be a Nominations and Elections Committee comprised of the Immediate Past Chair or his or her appointee and two members appointed by the Chair of the committee at the close of the annual meeting. The Committee shall propose a slate of nominees for those positions which are open at the time of the Annual Meeting.

B. Nominations shall be solicited in the first issue of The Archival Spirit, the Section's newsletter, published after the annual meeting, and a final listing of nominees will be announced in the last newsletter issued before the annual meeting.

Nominations may be made from the floor at the time of the Annual Meeting. Only members of the Society of American Archivists and the Section may be nominated as officers. All members of the Section may vote. In the case of a contested election, a vote shall be taken by secret ballot at the Annual Meeting. A majority of votes cast shall be required for election as a Section officer.

C. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall be responsible for tabulating and announcing the results of the elections. This will be done during the annual meeting. Elected officers shall assume office at the conclusion of the annual meeting.

D. Should a special election become necessary to fill a vacancy, the Nominations and Elections Committee shall receive nominations and propose candidates. As with regular elections, the committee shall be responsible for tabulating the ballots and announcing the results.

VII. Meetings

A. The Section shall meet annually at the time and place of the SAA annual meeting at a time determined by the SAA Program Committee.

B. Special meetings may be called by the Chair with the advice and consent of the Steering Committee. The content and nature of such a meeting shall be determined in advance and shared with the membership.

VIII. Amendments

A. Any members of the Section may propose amendments to these bylaws in writing to the Chair at least six months prior to the annual meeting. The Chair shall circulate the proposed amendments to the Steering Committee for their consideration. If a majority of the Steering Committee concurs with the proposals, they shall be submitted to the membership at the annual meeting. In that case a majority vote of those present at the annual meeting shall be necessary to amend the bylaws.

B. In the event that the majority of the Steering Committee does not approve the proposed amendments, the petitioner may still present his proposals at the annual meeting, which shall then require a two-thirds majority vote for adoption.

IX. Enactment

The original bylaws became effective immediately upon their adoption by majority vote of the members of the Religious Archives Section* at the annual meeting in 1983. The Chair and Secretary in office at the date of enactment shall continue in office until the expiration of the term for which they were elected. A Vice Chair/Chair Elect shall be nominated and elected at the meeting at which these bylaws are adopted, and shall succeed to the Chair upon the expiration of his/her term.

Amendments to these bylaws become effective following passage at the annual meeting.

X. Dissolution

The Section, noting failing interest or lack of accomplishing its objectives, may vote to dissolve by a majority. The SAA Council may also dissolve this Section if, in its opinion, it is no longer meeting the specified goals and objectives of the Section.

**The Section voted September 27, 1991, at the annual meeting in Philadelphia, to change its name from the Religious Archives Section to the Archivists of Religious Collections Section*