

Newsletter of
The Archives Industry Specific Group of ARMA International
and
The Records Management Round Table of the Society of American Archivists

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IN THIS ISSUE:

[Creating the Amway Corporate Archives within the Records Management Discipline](#)

[ISG NEWS: Gillian Hill, Archives ISG Leader](#)

[Déjà vu or Don't we already have a Records Management Policy?](#)

[The Saga of the Windows: The Sister Anne Virginie Archives Center](#)

[Records Management Roundtable](#)

[How to Reach Us](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

Creating the Amway Corporate Archives within the Records Management Discipline
by Bobbie Minier, Supervisor-Records Management/Archives, Amway Corporation

Although my current profession is one of a Records Manager, I'm sure if I had prior lives; one was as an Archivist. I have been in the Records Management Department at Amway Corporation for 15 years and have held a variety of positions. It was early on in my career in records that I had those uncomfortable feelings when we would process a record disposal and I would see certain things being slated for destruction. Over time, I took proactive steps to read and research all I could about Archives to gain the knowledge I needed to begin to glean and rescue those specified items from the jaws of death. To my surprise, I knew more about what was of endearing value than I gave myself credit for, as a mere Records Manager. I would not be surprised that many of my fellow Records professionals fall under that same assumption. This began the slow and steady process, on a very informal basis, that led to the building of a state-of-the-art facility - an official Archives for Amway Corporation.

Since I am not totally arrogant enough to think a few books and some research would make me an Archivist, I pursued getting permission to finding an Archivist on a contract basis, which we did do. Having an experienced Archivist to guide and assist us in these formative years has been a great value. I would say to my fellow Records Managers that you owe it to your profession and our fellow Archivists to start learning. Start small, but start and reach out to your fellow Archivists for help. Don't let your company's history end up in that big old landfill.

It can be and was a hard job to sell management on spending the money needed to keep and preserve what they see from a business perspective, as "just old stuff". Many business managers whose budgets are tight already have to be sold on the value an Archives program can bring. Amway was founded in 1959 and has had a records program of some form since the mid 60's. I believe if it was not for the current value my company sees in our Records Program and connecting the Archives with this long and well established program, I would not have been able to convince them to invest the money. It is my belief that it was that attitude, of caring and concern for my company's history and it's founding families, along with the dedication to protecting "the record of business" that has offered this opportunity to create a combined Records and Archives program.

I had to be very proactive, if not somewhat of a pest, in sharing and expressing my concerns, hopes, dreams and opinions, of why we needed to not just keep certain things, but to preserve them. I shared this with the founding families, their clerical staff and anyone else who would listen. I figured if I said it often enough and to the right people, the message would stick and it did.

For Amway, I felt it was important for Records Management and Archives both to exist in a manner where we could take into consideration not only the entire business or compliance life cycle of the record, but also it's historical value and preservation needs from the beginning of it's life. We have many steps we take to include the Archives as an active part of Records Management and the business need. We take the approach when inventorying and scheduling records, that we must keep the end in mind. With the large amounts of electronic records, if I do not preserve the record while it lives its business life, it may not be of use to the archives after its business life is over. This is by far the biggest challenge. Even with paper or other types of media, we try to split the retention time between office and storage so after an active time period, they are boxed and sent to Record Storage to live the remaining business life. We then have better controls of those records and stand less chance of them being disposed of by a well meaning employee once the business life is completed. We identify on our retention schedules records that should be earmarked for review by the Archivist. When we train employees on recordkeeping issues, they get an added treat of an archives lesson also. I use every opportunity to sell the use of our Archives program as well as our Records Programs and Services.

We have developed an internal intranet website that highlights not only our Records Programs and Services, but the Archives as well. We have plans for some open collections to be available on the site for employees to browse. These would include such things as on-line catalogs of speeches, photos, product containers and other objects that may be of interest to them.

Most recently we were asked to assume the handling of museum items. We will be using a digital camera to capture each piece, create an index and description and any other useful information. We will then use these images to create an on-line catalog of objects available for use in displays either in our Visitor Center or for special projects.

We currently have 45 collections equaling 1000 linear feet. Three of the most treasured

collections are of the very early and pre- Amway years of the founders and the private business papers of the two founders, Richard M. DeVos and Jay VanAndel. These holdings span over many years of friendship, as well as many business ventures; one being 40 years ago as founders of Amway Corporation.

We are now well known as the keepers of history for the company and receive items from active and past employees, IBO's (Independent Business Owners), and others outside of Amway. The number of requests and usage of information from the Archives continues to grow at a manageable pace. We currently man the archives with the direction of the contracted archivist and the current staff of the Records Management team. We have started small and are confident we will grow and be able to accomplish our goal of preserving the story of Amway for years to come.



ISG News:

by Gillian Hill, Archives ISG Leader

ARMA's Archives ISG met at the networking session at the Mid-Year Conference held at College Park, Maryland on April 4 and 5. Ten Archives ISG members attended. One was a student in the archival program at the University of Pittsburgh, the others were working either for corporations or the government, and had been given responsibility for their institutions' archives. Most had received no formal archival training. After the attendees had introduced themselves and described their work, I gave a presentation on setting up the records management and archival program at Greene County, where I am Records and Information Manager and County Archivist. I detailed the steps I took, where I went for assistance, and how I demonstrated to county officials the value of the program. As a result, most of the county's historical records are now located in the county archives in appropriate environmental conditions. There was a lively question and answer period in which attendees realized that despite the variety of their institutions, the problems we all faced are similar and help is available.

On April 15 the SAA/ARMA Joint Committee met at the offices of the Society of American Archivists in Chicago. I attended as Archives ISG Leader. This committee has been meeting for several years, and much work is being done. There is now an information booth for each association at the other's national conference, and a session offered for records managers at the SAA conference, and for archivists at the ARMA conference. There was discussion about the possibility of joint or concurrent conferences at some point. One of the major obstacles to this goal is that conferences are planned and contracts signed so far into the future. At this April meeting it was determined that officers' terms would begin on November 1, following the two national conferences. As both Jim Tammamaro, Chair, and David Gracy, Vice Chair, have unfortunately had to resign their offices, owing to the pressures of work, Randy Jones, of the SAA Records Management Roundtable, has accepted the position of Chair of the Committee and I have accepted the position of Vice Chair, beginning November 1 of this year.

At the end of April, I attended the National Forum on Archival Continuing Education (NFACE), in Decatur, Georgia, as one of two representatives of ARMA. The other representative was Pat Franks, of the Educators' ISG. The forum was sponsored by the Council of Historical Records Coordinators in cooperation with the Association for State and Local History, working with funds provided through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). Among the goals of the project are to gather and disseminate information about what continuing educational services are available for those who care for historical records, and to encourage collaboration and coordination among allied professionals to develop additional offerings. It was an exciting and profitable forum, with representatives from historical associations; libraries; museums; federal, state and university archives, as well as records managers, sharing ideas and needs with each other. Two of the main ideas that came out of the meeting were the need to have a central clearinghouse where people could go for information exchange regarding educational offerings, and having the education officers from the allied associations meet on a regular basis to develop a strategy for establishing priorities for continuing collaboration.

Danna Bell-Russel from the NFACE Program Committee has offered to write a summary of the conference that all the participants can use to publicize its intentions and outcomes through their organizational newsletters. So there will be more to come later.



Déjà vu or Don't we already have a Records Management Policy?
by Shari Bishop Laist

Hospitals today are looking for ways to improve efficiency and cut costs. When I arrived five years ago at Saint Raphael's no integrated records management policy existed. Attempts on my part to start one were stymied by senior staff's departure, re-organizations, a proprietary attitude in departments, and the usual lack of time. My primary challenge was to start an archives program from an assortment of boxes and filing cabinets in the old convent's basement. (See related article). However, I did get a records disposition policy approved. Some departments, namely financial, human resources, and public relations did get scheduled and in working with the legal counsel and internal audit staff, as well as the off-site storage facility, positive contacts were established. When the JCAHO requested better records management standards for health care systems' administrative records, we had already done the ground work. Today the provisions of HIPPA and EDI standards and security requirements make verifiable and enforceable records retention schedules for all media even more vital.

As often happens, an outside person was brought in to bring our records policies into compliance with the Joint Commission.. Fortunately, archives was high enough up in the reporting structure to be informed of this project and avoid recreating of the wheel. Also, the senior staff particularly the legal counsel, have always been terribly supportive of historical documentation and preservation. The person hired by internal audit was pleased to have my help and only needed to understand my job ! "You want to keep the minutes

how long?"

As a result of meetings with her, the original records disposition policy was incorporated into a new Record Retention and Management Policy. This policy also more precisely addresses E-mail communications, and electronic records. A separate focused archives records policy has also been extracted. The compliance manual which is written applicable to function and not department specific, references the archives policy and includes an archives records check list which I have attached to this article. Specifications and improvements will come as the policy is used and questions arise. I also see a role for the Archivist on the Compliance Committee and in any forms design. Much of what I have discarded over the years has been duplicate minutes or publications or strategic plans and the like. It will be a great savings in time and personnel to identify one record copy for this material.

Without getting involved in Records Management from the beginning when setting up the archives, this exercise on the part of legal counsel and internal audit could have been disastrous. Because the organization has a commitment to archives, I can say I do not agree with such and such, i.e., schedule ADM-95-02, CEO files CY + 6. Yes, there are still some schedules which I question. However, having a written schedule assures that everyone is talking about the same thing, or if they are not, it gives us the chance to define it further. A once good, but inactive or unenforceable policy has been given new life.

More than a year ago, I asked on Caduceus and the Archives list serve if people had checklists or retention schedules to share. Well, good retention schedules have eliminated my old emails and I regret to say that I did not save the names of the people who generously sent me copies. I am most grateful and thank you anonymously. Many others asked me to let them know what I finally compiled. On my end, administration kept telling me it had to be shorter --specifically one page. So here it is folks. I have also included a list of what not to send to the archives which is now part of the revised and focused archives policy.

Before using the archives records checklist, please fill out the general information about your department or personal records. Consider the answers to these questions in conjunction with your answering YES or NO to the checklist.

A copy of this form must accompany your records when transferring them to off site storage or archives.

Check your department's compliance manual for the appropriate retention periods on non-current or non-archival material.

Visit the Sister Anne Virginie Archives home page

Attachments:

[DEPARTMENT QUESTIONNAIRE](#)

[CHECKLIST](#)

[ARCHIVES POLICY R90 ITEMS SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDED FROM THE](#)

ARCHIVES



THE SAGA OF THE WINDOWS

The Sister Anne Virginie Archives Center
Saint Raphael Healthcare System
New Haven, CT
by Shari Bishop Laist

Five years ago, I entered a dark basement room in Saint Raphael's convent filled with boxes, filing cabinets, liturgical garments, religious statues, Christmas wreaths, wheel chairs, paintings and yet to be discovered treasures. Why after 85 years did the hospital feel the urge to organize its historical records? No doubt Pope John XXIII's call for increased attention to preserving historical records on all levels of the Catholic Church influenced the Sisters and Senior staff at Saint Raphael's. Anyone within SAA knows that the presence of Catholic Religious have increased since Vatican II ended in 1965. Another event that stimulated the growth of an archives was the 75th anniversary of the hospital in 1982. Scouring the various storage rooms for the occasion, some individuals, Sr. Anne Virginie, in particular, recognized that our history was turning to dust. Sister Anne became the CEO in 1986. A mutual friend, Sr. Mary Ellen Gleason, asked me to give Sister Anne a call in 1994. The rest as they say is history. I walked into the basement, wrote a proposal and a year later, took on the task of developing the archives.

I found an institution fiercely proud of its heritage. However, its history was mostly oral. The hospital has ties to the soul and fabric of the immigrant experience, the Catholic Church, and the development of the social tapestry of the New Haven area. The changing populations of Irish, Russian and Eastern European Jews, Italians, African-Americans, and newer population groups today have turned to Saint Raphael's for much more than sick care. The neighborhood has also physically supported the hospital with whatever was needed: ice cream or turkeys on Thanksgiving, linens, or time and labor. The archivist would need a creative and broadened scope to document this story. The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and a group of physicians in New Haven founded the hospital in 1907. At the time England's Queen Victoria had recently died, Kaiser William II ruled in Prussia, Theodore Roosevelt was president and there was no commercial medical insurance. (See picture of Hospital in 1910.)

As I worked my way around the campus, I peered under a tarp in the former laundry room of the convent. Beautiful, if somewhat dirty, stained glass windows in their original wooden frames shined back at me. Little did I know that this project, the identification of some very large religious oil paintings, and the proper distribution of some pre-Vatican II liturgical objects, would occupy much of my first years at Saint Raphael's, and continue to involve me in the present. One of the archivists on my staff at the Ford Foundation used to remark that the Foundation had no "good toys." Saint Raphael's has opened up a world of

"good toys."

My priorities depended on circumstance. In order for the hospital board to accept my "five-year plan" to establish an archives, I had to predict quick results with diminishing costs. This plan included, an archives assistant who could also double as an office manager, and some part-time clerical staff. A design for a suitable working environment including square footage, shelving, etc. was also included in the original scheme. Not knowing where space would be found, this was still a necessary exercise. A physical design gave the project substance, so that construction could not tuck the archives behind the library or in some other closet-like space in another department which probably did not want us. Support from people at all levels of the organization was wonderful. The Carpenters, maintenance, and housekeeping crews did their best to make the convent basement livable. Reporting directly to the CEO did not hurt. If given a similar challenge, try to report to as high a level as you can.

Records management and organizing the facility worked in tandem, because I found so many gaps, but also so much duplication. Financial records proved to be a great place to start records scheduling because so many of the records have standard retention periods and could be discarded. This exercise saved the Healthcare system thousands of dollars in storage fees. Educating people about records retention is also a way to segue into identifying records that have historical value. Getting out of the basement to meet with department heads met another priority—Visibility.

Visibility was also served by preparing exhibits, speaking to groups, and contributing to articles in internal publications. Exhibits were important early in the project because they put the collection out there in front of the public. Many donations resulted from this outreach. Space was found when tenants moved out of what was the former School of Nursing dormitory. Developing the history of this site as a theme, and enlisting the help of the School of Nursing Alumni, we sought funding for and developed a large permanent exhibit on nursing. The exhibit unveiling was timed for a reunion of the nursing school alumni and an open house for the new archives space. Today, this exhibit, including a life-like mannequin in a 1913 nursing uniform, greets the visitor-- and many greet her back!

Obtaining approval for official records and collection policies, and mission statements from the trustees and senior administration was as important as designing space, doing exhibits and poking around the campus. In writing the collection policy, a holistic approach was necessary; bearing in mind the city and cultural climate at the time, and the interweaving mission of healthcare, the Catholic Church, and the Sisters of Charity. In order to deliver on my "quick results promise", a way to inventory and index what we had needed to be found. Microsoft Access became my workhorse. I now have Tables/indexes for much of the vital information, including: former residents and medical staff, students from the school of nursing, internal publications, and significant medical and historical events. Tables of donors, accessions, and a box inventory are linked together. The first department inventoried and entered into the access database was the Medical Staff Support Office. With the database we created, our medical staff office can answer most queries without retrieving the files. This service also ensured us of receiving all medical staff committee

and board reports.

Our photograph-imaging project is also an access-based program and can interact with our other finding aids. Many of the images are now available over the Intranet and can then be used in presentations or publications. (See: Photograph of one of the founding Physicians, Dr. William F. Verdi) We are in the process of using a digital camera to catalog objects, usually old medical equipment. Access is a very powerful database, if not a traditional archival tool. Related to these projects, retention and disposition schedules for departments by record types have been distributed. (See: related Déjà vu article).

In my rummaging around in the off-site storage areas (read warehouse), I also discovered some valuable paintings, which we were able to sell through an auction house. We used the income to establish a historical fund for special preservation projects, or anniversary exhibits and publications. The liturgical objects, religious statues, and old, but usable medical equipment found in the basement were all donated to charities throughout the world and many valuable friends were made in the community in the process of placing the items.

Oh, I finally did get round to paper. Documenting that oral tradition involved locating annual reports, minutes of the Boards and the Medical staff, scrapbooks, and internal publications. Also unearthed, were original patient ledgers and minute books. Most of the non-current medical and administrative records are out-sourced to a commercial warehouse. Establishing a cooperative relationship with the offsite facility has benefited both the hospital and the archives. The small archive must use what is available rather than rebuild structures.

It is clear that organizing Saint Raphael's records provides a valuable resource for historians of women's history, and to medical, social, ethnic, and urban, historians. Internally, the data and meta-data have been invaluable to planning, fund raising, and public relations departments. The records authenticate Saint Raphael's as a value-driven institution committed to the community and to a dual role of caring for both spirit and body.

Word is getting out about the archives. When a staff member died recently, his successor called me to review his office files. This physician was involved with early resident education and the affiliation agreements with the local medical school. He also did research work with victims of the atomic war in Japan. His papers are a valuable addition to the collection.

The daughter of a physician, who served on the staff since his resident days in 1935, called me to help her appraise his book collection. A search of his office and basement revealed that he had saved all of his patient files. Here is an Italian-American Physician who did everything from delivering babies to surgery for a specific population in the city. I had to keep it all for some future Ph.D. student!

If, as an archivist, I had narrowly defined my mission and adhered to a strict collection

policy, the chance to involve a variety of friends and staff of the hospital in pulling together to develop the archives might have been lost. The paintings, liturgical items and medical equipment might have continued to languish in the warehouse and the windows most certainly would have been split up or deposited in a landfill.

Establishing an archives here has depended on seamless cooperation among many departments. One cannot go into a large organization and do it all alone. I was blessed with a wonderful assistant for those first years who was a colleague and contributed greatly to all of our accomplishments. Like the amoebae, she has split off to start an archives in another hospital. A very positive sign! Wonderful students and about 15 volunteers also contributed to the effort. As a group, Healthcare archivists are a small, but growing group. There is now a healthcare archivists' listserve in New England: <http://MAGL.listbot.com>. (See: photograph of new facility, Feb 2, 2000).

Back to the windows -- They turned out to be from the original chapel in a building long since destroyed. Before they could be examined and appraised thoroughly, I learned about environmental hazards and other non-archival nightmares. However, I also heard many touching stories about Saint Raphael's history. Long ago some maintenance men had taken upon themselves the mission of saving the windows before the wrecking ball came. The windows had been moved many times since then as buildings were torn down or space was renovated. However, always somehow they survived -- on many one can still read their original dedications: The medical staff, the Ladies Auxiliary, a class of Nursing students, a loving spouse or child, or a founder's name. They hold a special meaning for staff members who remember studying before them in the chapel of cleaning them for special events and for patients and friends who found peace sitting in their warm glow. Many pulled together to save these windows. Now, six years after I "found" them, these same windows have been revitalized by a contemporary artist. They have again taken their place giving beauty and spiritual healing to Saint Raphael's patients and visitors. They speak to a continuity of caring and commitment to moral values, which date from the founding of the hospital. (See: photograph of re-installed) Could any paper record tell Saint Raphael's story better? I think not.



Records Management Roundtable Minutes
Saturday Aug 28, 1999 Pittsburgh, PA, Pittsburgh Hilton and Towers

Session proposals - People with ideas should contact Sarah Polirer at 212-428-2881
Suggestions included:

Education and competence
Impact of certification
Standards for continuing education
Building support for an Archives/Records Management Program.
How do Records Managers and Archivists look at each other?
Imaging and internet applications

Splintered professions

Other business:

Albin Wagner read a letter from GRIP the Government ISG. They are seeking individuals to work on small teams, particularly in the health industry, to come up with records schedules. They eventually want to set up links to their web sites. Working on phase one of the draft at present.

Sarah Polirer mentioned an article in the [Aug. 23, 1999 issue of Forbes](#) regarding Records Management. It can be found on page 144.

Ed Galvin is maintaining our SAARMRT listserv at Syracuse University.

Presentations followed by AJ Du Fresne , Isaac Wallace, and Phil Mooney about marketing your archives and generating income.

1. Issac Wallace wisaac@Clemson.edu 864-656-4336.

Isaac Wallace spoke about ways to generate income from the records center. He is at Clemson University the second largest public institution in South Carolina, founded as a land grant college in 1893.

In 1985 a functionary records management program was founded to comply with South Carolina's Public Record Act. In 1987 a records center was established. All records are scheduled. A complete inventory was performed. The center charges back for storage and retrieval. Three percent of the records are microfilmed and this cost is also charged back to the office.

The records center rents its staff out to the community. These consultant fees go back into the program. Last year his center generated \$80,000 in revenue.

2. AJ Du Fresne The ARCHIVE Co., Finley Ohio. Consulting firm. Ajd@thearchives.org
Funding and maintaining the Municipal Preservation Trust Fund, one of his clients, included: charging for copies, scanning for patrons, and research charges. Reference charges are based on the particular nature of the institution. For example a place like Vanderbilt whose clients are physicians and pharmaceutical companies charges as much as \$65/ hour. More modest charges are around \$10/ Hour.

He also recommends setting up investment trust funds.

3. Philip Mooney at Coca-Cola, Atlanta, GA. 404-676-3399

Philip Mooney runs a successful marketing and licensing operation. He both produces material and markets it. Coca-Cola maintains a book store and gift shop. They digitize images at a high resolution and send them directly over the web to clients internationally. They also sell photographs to specialty houses. A variety of products have been marketed for: photo histories, calendars, post cards, commemorative items, and note cards. Patrons have used the collections for alumni groups, fund raising incentives, and personalized awards. They have also sold audio visual material for sports highlights, speeches and radio

and television projects. They deal with one vendor for their digitized images. The vendor then works directly with clients freeing up the archives staff from a lot of paperwork and non-archival activities.

This is a very large scale operation. They maintain over 5,000 images on-line, have an extensive CD-ROM collection and generate 30% of Coca-Cola's \$26 million in revenues.

Another revenue generating suggestion from the group was to scan family pictures, and assist family in reunions to produce digitized family albums.

A representative from NARA said that the trend is towards charge backs. NARA is going to start charging departments for storage and service. More information can be found at <http://WWW.NARA.Gov/>



How to Reach Us

SAA Records Management Round Table

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Upcoming Events

SAA Records Management Roundtable Annual Meeting
Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting, Denver, CO
Sat., Sept. 2, 2000, 8:00 - 9:30 am

[Records Management Programs at SAA 2000 Denver](#)

Archives ISG Annual Meeting
Will be held during the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA)
International Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV
Oct. 23 - 26, 2000

Table of Contents

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