



### *Infinity*

The newsletter of the SAA Preservation Section  
Winter 2006, Volume 21, number 2

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#### **NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS :**

**From the section chair**

**SAA President announces MayDay Project**

**Suggested Mayday May Day Activities**

**Update your Emergency Procedure and contact list (form)**

**NARA Office of Regional Records Services (NR) Archival Training and Continuing Education Calendar**

**NARA announcements**

**News from the Regional Alliance for Preservation (RAP)**

**SAA annual meeting 2006 dates and hotel information**

**Section Committee members**

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#### **FROM THE CHAIR**

As everyone knows, this has been an active period of time in dealing with disasters - what with Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma as well as floods in the northeast. I have been fortunate to have represented the Society of American Archivists on the weekly conference calls hosted by Heritage Emergency National Task Force, as many of you know. Initially these calls were focused on trying to find out the extent of the damage in the affected areas and locating colleagues dispersed by the hurricanes. As time progressed and colleagues have been found, as people have been able to gain access to the affected areas to assess the damage, and as reliable information has been disseminated; discussions have focused more and more on status reports and efforts to begin remediation activities, which will take months if not years to accomplish. One side benefit of these conference calls is that we, the representatives of many organizations such as the Society of American Archivists, the American Institute for Conservation, the National Park Service, the American Association for State and Local History, the representatives of the various State Historic Preservation Offices and State Archives, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, the various Regional Alliance for Preservation members, and many others have been able to discuss and coordinate recovery and assistance efforts. Hopefully this will continue in the future and will lead to some more cooperation as events occur in the future.

It has been heart warming to see and hear of the activities undertaken by archivists to assist colleagues in distress. Some institutions have provided temporary employment for those out of work. Some have offered storage space for collections while buildings are

rehabilitated. Many have volunteered to help in any way possible, and many have contributed to the SAA/SSA fund to assist archivists in the affected areas. We would be remiss in not mentioning the role that the Society of Southwest Archivists has played in serving as a conduit for information about these events. I would also like to thank Richard Pearce-Moses, current SAA President, for the activist role that he has played in responding to this crisis.

So where does this leave us, the members of SAA's Preservation Section? If nothing else, it should make all of us either think seriously about developing our own disaster plan or updating the one that exists, no matter how old it is. What are some of the lessons learned at this early date? In the first place it is crucial to know your environs. The collections that appear to have survived the best in New Orleans and Mississippi (where the buildings are still standing) were located on the second floor. There was at least some recognition that Mother Nature will flood areas when there is that possibility. Are you in a flood plain, and, if so, what steps have you taken to protect your collections? How many of us have really prioritized our collections? In at least one instance in New Orleans, the collections were prioritized and the boxes were marked with fluorescent tape so that they could be found easily in the dark with a flashlight. This served them well as they were able to locate and move these collections quickly and easily once the staff was allowed back in to assess the damage. How many of us have a staff list that is current with home phone numbers, cell phone numbers, and email addresses so that everyone can be contacted in the event of a disaster? Have we backed up our IT data and housed it at a different location that would not be directly affected if our institution were to be hit by a disaster?

By the time that you receive this issue of *Infinity*, you should also have receive information about the MayDay Program (as in *MayDay*, *Mayday* the maritime call in distress for assistance), an SAA initiative to raise individual's and institutions' consciousness about disaster preparedness. Conceived by Richard Pearce-Moses, MayDay will focus on individuals and institutions carrying our one or two small things that can assist in the event of a disaster. These could include checking the staff call list, running an evacuation drill, checking the disaster recovery supplies, etc. I hope that everyone will participate so that we can make all our collections that much safer.

I could go on for a long time, but I think that you get the message. How many times have we expressed the need for an institutional disaster plan and not gotten anywhere? Now it is the time to push either to get one developed or to update the one that has sat on the shelf for "lo these many years." Disaster planning is crucial to the survival of our institutions, their mission, and to our collections. Let us not let this opportunity get away, and let us build on the momentum to create our plan. For a number of years,, the name of my disaster workshop was "After the Deluge, What Next?" Do you know? Now that we have all heard or read about the impact that Mother Nature has had on the institutions and collections in the southern states, it is important for us to come to the realization that we could be next. Disaster planning so often gets put off as it is not something that needs to be done yesterday or something that the Dean needs now. It is something that is always lurking in the shadows waiting to be done. Let us dust off what was once started and move ahead. Let this be a challenge to each and everyone of you!

Gregor Trinkaus-Randall  
Chair  
Preservation Section

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**FROM THE SAA PRESIDENT**

Dear Colleague:

Protecting collections is one of our fundamental responsibilities as archivists. Last year's visits from Katrina, Rita, and Wilma certainly provided a wake-up call, reminding us of the very real importance of disaster preparedness. Yet ironically, the Heritage Health Index, released soon after the hurricanes, reported that few institutions have disaster plans and for those that do, often the plan is out of date. Given human nature, it's easy to put off disaster planning as we devote our attentions to tasks with more immediate "payback."

The Society of American Archivists hopes that your organization will join us in the "MayDay Project" - a collaborative campaign to improve professionals' readiness to respond to disaster. The MayDay project encourages all records and archives professionals to do something on May 1st of each year - even if it's something simple - to help ensure that they are prepared to respond to a disaster.

Because disasters are, for many archivists, unexpected and rare, there's little if any motivation to prepare. By designating a specific date on which to focus the profession's attention on preparedness, we hope to trigger individuals to take action. As more individuals and repositories participate over time, the exercise may become ingrained in our professional consciousness.

MayDay focuses on doing something simple - something that can be accomplished in a day but that can have a profound impact on an individual's or a repository's ability to respond. Taking time to read key policy documents keeps information fresh. Conducting a drill to evacuate the building ensures that everyone knows the plan and can identify problems with it. Updating contact information and even creating wallet-size versions of an emergency contact roster, makes it possible to locate people when time is critical. Over time, a repository may choose different activities.

SAA will promote MayDay to its 4,400 members over the next several months via Archival Outlook, the SAA website, and postings to the Archives and Archivists List, the SAA Leadership List, and other appropriate listservs. We will be providing a list of suggested activities from which archivists might choose, as well as other supporting materials. We would be grateful if you could distribute this information to your members and help to promote the idea of MayDay as widely as possible.

If you are willing to participate in the MayDay project, could you please drop me a note to indicate that you will assist in promoting it? I look forward to hearing from you!

If you have questions, concerns, or ideas for how to make MayDay a success, please let me know.

Best regards.

Richard Pearce-Moses  
Society of American Archivists  
President, 2005-2006  
[president@archivists.org](mailto:president@archivists.org)  
602-542-4035

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### SUGGESTED MAYDAY MAY DAY ACTIVITIES

Mayday is one day. Twenty-four hours; eight for the work day. You can't do a lot in just 24 hours. But even small things – things that can be done in a day – can make a difference when disaster strikes.

Have a disaster drill!! Different archives face different threats. All repositories may have a fire. Those on the Gulf and Atlantic coasts are threatened by hurricanes. Repositories in the Midwest, tornados, and those in the West, earthquakes. These disasters often strike with little warning, so it's critical that staff know how to respond immediately. There's no time to plan when you have to evacuate a burning building. A disaster drill will help remind staff of the proper procedures and can also reveal unanticipated problems that need to be corrected.

Disaster drills are often hard to execute because they interrupt public service. If you can't perform a full-fledged drill, have a "silent drill." Identify a skeleton staff that will remain on duty to provide public service while the rest of the staff conducts the exercise.

Update your contact list!! One of the most critical elements of disaster response knows how to contact critical people – emergency responders, staff, and vendors. Make sure your staff has an up-to-date list that includes as much contact information as possible: work and phone numbers (including direct lines at work), mobile phone numbers, work and home email accounts, and any other addresses. Staff at many institutions hit by hurricanes in 2005 discovered that they couldn't use work email or phone numbers because work systems were completely out; those who had an alternative phone or email often could connect.

Create a master list for people to keep at home. Also, create a small pocket list of key staff members that can be kept in a pocket or a wallet.

Invite a local fire captain to visit your repository. Firefighters' first responsibility is to put out fires. But, firefighters are also sensitive to the property they are protecting. Inviting your local firefighters to visit your repository can give them a chance to understand the importance of the materials and to consider how to fight any fires effectively. Your

firefighters can also give you clues on how you can use fire extinguishers and help fight fires as soon as they break out. Training by firefighters in the use of fire extinguishers should be done in conjunction with your institutional and/or fire department protocols.

#### Plan Disaster Preparedness Activities for the Coming Year

Creating – even revising – a disaster plan takes more than a day. You can take time to strategize what you need to do to update an existing plan or develop a plan. Set target deadlines to accomplish key steps.

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*EXAMPLE of DISASTER PLAN:*

#### EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

UPDATED: [DATE]

*Please read this guide thoroughly before an emergency occurs.  
Be familiar with your emergency response team members.  
Update these procedures every MayDay (1 May)*

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#### Emergency Phone Numbers

	Non-Emergency	Emergency
Police	555-1234	911
Fire		911
Paramedic		911
Security		
Building manager		
Poison control		

#### Emergency Response Team

Home and personal mobile phone numbers are to be used only as a last resort. Home and mobile phone numbers are confidential and may be given out only to officials in public safety agencies.

	Primary number	Secondary Numbers
Safety Coordinator		
Alternate 1		
Alternate 2		
Medical assistance		
Floor warden 1		
Floor warden 2		
Floor warden 3		

## Floor warden 4

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### Fire

#### Staff assembly area

##### *If you discover a fire*

1. Call 911 and report the location of the fire.
2. Activate fire alarm,
3. Move everyone away from the area of the fire.
4. Notify the [RECEPTIONIST] so that they can direct first responders to the right location.
5. Small fires: use fire extinguishers, but *only if it is safe*, and a knowledge or when and how to exit..
6. Large fires: *get out*.
7. All fires, larger or small, must be reported to (NAME, PHONE).

##### *In case of fire alarm, evacuate the building*

1. Proceed to the nearest, safe exit.
  - Do not use elevators.
  - Stay low if there is smoke.
  - Feel the top of all doors you pass through. If it is hot or if smoke is visible, do not open the door and use another exit.
  - Close doors as you exit to help contain fire and smoke.
2. Do not break windows *unless essential to save life*. Broken windows provide a source of oxygen, which feeds fires.
3. Do not attempt to save possessions at the risk of personal injury.
4. Floor wardens: To the extent it is safe, walk through your designated area, checking for any people who have not evacuated.

##### *If trapped in a room*

1. Place cloth material under and around a door to prevent smoke from entering.
2. Close as many doors as possible between you and the fire.
3. Stay low to the ground to avoid inhaling smoke.
4. Try to signal your location through a window.
5. If you have a cell phone, call (NUMBER).

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### Evacuation

#### Staff assembly area

1. If safe, secure vital records and shut down electrical equipment.

2. Inform patrons and guests that the building must be evacuated.
3. Proceed to the nearest, safe exit
  - Do not use elevators.
  - Stay low if there is smoke.
  - Feel the top of all doors you pass through. If it is hot or if smoke is visible, do not open the door and use another exit.
  - Close doors as you exit to help contain fire and smoke.
4. Do not attempt to save possessions at the risk of personal injury.
5. Floor wardens: To the extent it is safe, walk through your designated area, checking for any people who have not evacuated.
6. Assemble at the designated assembly area (NAME HERE).
7. Supervisors: Tally all personnel in the assembly area. Work with staff to identify any individuals seen as work during who are not in the assembly area and who may still be in the building.
8. Do not re-enter the building until authorized by supervisors.

#### *Disabled individuals*

Always involve the individual; they are experts on their own disabilities and how to best move them out of a building in an emergency. Keep them informed so that they know what is happening.

Persons with mobility impairments who cannot evacuate the building without assistance should be taken to an area of refuge where they can be rescued by the fire department.

Visually impaired persons are often familiar with their immediate work area, but may need assistance to go through areas they normally don't use. Offer to guide the individual, and be sure to explain where you are going, any obstacles, and the direction you are about to turn. When you reach the staff assembly area, orient the individual to the surrounding area. Ensure the individual always has someone with them.

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#### Medical Emergencies

1. If an individual needs medical attention, yell for help, then call 911.
  2. If an individual needs CPR, contact [NAME, PHONE OF STAFF MEMBER TRAINED IN CPR].
  3. Notify the [RECEPTIONIST] so that they can direct first responders to the right location.
  4. Do not move the individual unless essential to protect life. If necessary to prevent shock, keep the individual warm and elevate lower extremities if possible.
  5. Control any heavy bleeding using direct pressure on the wound.
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## News Media

1. To avoid misinformation, all inquiries from the new media should be directed to a public information officer or the individual with the highest rank available.
2. Home phone numbers are confidential and not to be given out.

## Contacts

(Name, title)	W:
	H:
(Name, title)	W:
	H:
(Name, title)	W:
	H:

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## MayDay:

1. Management: Ensure all information in the printed procedures is up to date.
2. All staff: Read and re-familiarize yourself with these procedures. Ask questions about anything you do not understand.
3. Be able to identify two emergency exit paths.

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**National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)  
Office of Regional Records Services (NR)  
Archival Training and Continuing Education Calendar:  
On the Web at:**

<http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/archives-resources/archival-training-calendar.html>

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## SAA Preservation Workshops: a sampling

### **April 26, 2006 "Oral History: From Planning to Preservation"**

Bloomington, IL <http://www.archivists.org/prof-education/workshop-detail.asp?id=1656>

### **April 27-28, 2005 "Archival Perspectives in Digital Preservation"**

University Park, PA <http://www.archivists.org/prof-education/workshop-detail.asp?id=1650>



**May 26, 2006 "Oral History: From Planning to Preservation"**

Bloomington, IL <http://www.archivists.org/prof-education/workshop-detail.asp?id=1656>

**For questions, please contact Solveig DeSutter or Jodie Stauffer at  
Tel: 312-922-0140; or E-mail: [education@archivists.org](mailto:education@archivists.org).**

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**National Archives to Hold Preservation Conference on March 16**

*Beyond the Numbers: Specifying and Achieving an Efficient Preservation Environment*

Washington, DC. . . The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) will host its 20th annual preservation conference on Thursday, March 16, 2006, from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Archivist of the United States Allen Weinstein will provide opening remarks for the event, which will be held in the William G. McGowan Theater of the National Archives Building, located on Constitution Avenue between 7th and 9th Streets NW in Washington, D.C., and is fully accessible.

The conference is open to the general public and will be of particular interest to conservators, curators, librarians, records managers, architects, facilities managers and preservation specialists. The fee is \$85 (\$40 for full-time students). For more information or to register, go to: <http://www.archives.gov/preservation/conferences/2006/> or contact Conference Coordinator Richard Schneider at 301-837-3617 or [richard.schneider@nara.gov](mailto:richard.schneider@nara.gov). The conference is open to the media. Contact the public affairs office at 202 357-5300 for more information.

This year's theme, "Beyond the Numbers: Specifying and Achieving an Efficient Preservation Environment," will explore how the National Archives and other institutions are addressing the need for providing preservation-oriented environmental control and building design to ensure the preservation of their historic and cultural collections in light of escalating construction costs, shrinking budgets and the ever-increasing price of energy.

Conference topics will include: tracing the evolution of preservation environments, specifying the requirements for a preservation quality storage environment, understanding supporting mechanical systems, energy savings projects in cultural institutions, providing practical environments for cultural property in historic buildings, managing a successful mechanical systems project and weighing alternative solutions for long-term preservation.

Conference speakers will include experts in the fields of preservation, building design, facilities management and archival programs: Ernest Conrad, Principal of the Landmark Facilities Group; James Reilly, Director of the Image Permanence Institute; Richard Kerschner, Director of Preservation and Conservation at the Shelburne Museum; William

Kline, Vice President of the Smith Group, Inc., and Doris A. Hamburg, Director of Preservation Programs at the National Archives. For a full listing of speakers, please visit <http://www.archives.gov/preservation/conferences/2006/details.html>.

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## National Archives and Google Launch Pilot Project to Digitize and Offer Historic Films Online

Washington, D.C. and Mountain View, Calif. – Feb. 24, 2006 – Archivist of the United States Allen Weinstein and Google (NASDAQ:GOOG) Co-Founder and President of Technology Sergey Brin today announced the launch of a pilot program to make holdings of the National Archives available for free online. This non-exclusive agreement will enable researchers and the general public to access a diverse collection of historic movies, documentaries and other films from the National Archives via Google Video ([video.google.com/nara.html](http://video.google.com/nara.html)) as well as the National Archives website ([www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)).

"This is an important step for the National Archives to achieve its goal of becoming an archives without walls," said Professor Weinstein. "Our new strategic plan emphasizes the importance of providing access to records anytime, anywhere. This is one of many initiatives that we are launching to make our goal a reality. For the first time, the public will be able to view this collection of rare and unusual films on the Internet."

"Today, we've begun to make the extraordinary historic films of the National Archives available to the world for the first time online," said Sergey Brin, co-founder and president of technology at Google. "Students and researchers whether in San Francisco or Bangladesh can watch remarkable video such as World War II newsreels and the story of Apollo 11 - the historic first landing on the Moon."

The pilot program undertaken by the National Archives and Google features 101 films from the audiovisual collections preserved at the Archives. Highlights of the pilot project include:

- The earliest film preserved in the National Archives holdings by Thomas Armat, "Carmencita - Spanish Dance," featuring the famous Spanish Gypsy dancer, 1894 (<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=6020302018400450975&q=Carmencita+-+Spanish+Dance>);
- A representative selection of U.S. government newsreels, documenting World War II, 1941-45 ([http://video.google.com/videosearch?q=owner%3Anara+type%3Aworld\\_war\\_II&so=0](http://video.google.com/videosearch?q=owner%3Anara+type%3Aworld_war_II&so=0));
- A sampling of documentaries produced by NASA on the history of the spaceflight program (<http://video.google.com/videosearch?q=owner%3Anara+type%3Anasa&so=0>);
- Motion picture films, primarily from the 1930s, that document the history and establishment of a nationwide system of national and state parks. Included is early

footage of modern Native American activities, Boulder Dam, documentation of water and wind erosion, Civilian Conservation Corps workers, and the establishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority. A 1970 film documents the expansion of recreational programs for inner city youth across the nation (<http://video.google.com/videosearch?q=owner%3Anara+type%3Aparks&so=0>).

The National Archives and Google are exploring the possibilities of expanding the on-line film collection and making the Archives extensive textual holdings available via the Internet.

### **About the National Archives**

The National Archives and Records Administration, an independent federal agency, is the nation's record keeper. Founded in 1934, its mission is unique – to serve American democracy by safeguarding and preserving the records of our Government, ensuring that the people can discover, use, and learn from this documentary heritage. We ensure continuing access to the essential documentation of the rights of American citizens and the actions of their government. We support democracy, promote civic education, and facilitate historical understanding of our national experience. The National Archives meets a wide range of information needs, among them helping people to trace their families' history, making it possible for veterans to prove their entitlement to medical and other benefits, and preserving original White House records. The National Archives carries out its mission through a nationwide network of archives, records centers, and Presidential Libraries, and on the Internet at [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov).

### **About Google Inc.**

Google's innovative search technologies connect millions of people around the world with information every day. Founded in 1998 by Stanford Ph.D. students Larry Page and Sergey Brin, Google today is a top web property in all major global markets. Google's targeted advertising program provides businesses of all sizes with measurable results, while enhancing the overall web experience for users. Google is headquartered in Silicon Valley with offices throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia. For more information, visit [www.google.com](http://www.google.com).

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### **News from the Regional Alliance for Preservation (RAP)**

The Regional Alliance for Preservation (RAP) is pleased to announce the launch of our new website at [www.PreserveCollections.org](http://www.PreserveCollections.org). RAP, a national network of nonprofit organizations with expertise in the field of conservation and preservation, provides information and resources on preservation and conservation for cultural institutions and the public throughout the United States. The new website includes a calendar of Training and Educational Opportunities; a list of Conservation and Preservation Services provided by RAP members; links to related organizations; and a Publications & Resources section with a searchable bibliography of full text reports and documents, and specialized bibliographies prepared to answer common collection care concerns for libraries, archives, museums, historical societies, and house museums. Please come visit us at [www.PreserveCollections.org](http://www.PreserveCollections.org).

The RAP website is made possible through funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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## SAA ANNUAL MEETING 2006 PREVIEW

DC 2006: Joint Annual Meeting of NAGARA, COSA, and SAA in Washington, D.C. beginning July 30 through August 6, 2006. Conference will be held at the [Hilton Washington](#) and hotel Reservations \$149 single, \$179 double. For more information, contact the [Hilton Washington](#), 1919 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20009 800-HILTONS or 202/483-3000.

Note that the Preservation Section Meeting will be on Friday, August 4, 2006 from 12:15-2:15 pm. Tentatively on the program are Alan Aiches, cultural resources person from FEMA in Louisiana, Kristen Laise from Heritage Preservation who will talk about the Heritage Health Index, and either Jane Long or Larry Reger from Heritage Preservation who will talk about the Heritage Emergency National Task Force.

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### Preservation Section Committee (<http://is.gseis.ucla.edu/orgs/saapreserv/prindex.htm> )

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