

"3 Years After Katrina – What Have We Learned?"



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(RACO SOUTH – Atlanta, Georgia – September 9, 2008)

**IMPACT
TO
FEDERAL AGENCY
RECORDS**

Federal Agencies Fared Okay Overall

Examples:

- FBI "Records SWAT Team" captured their records early
- Finance Center had some 15,000 cf damaged (now at NARA)
- US Corps of Engineers had some records damaged
- Social Security Administration lost some records



**WHAT
WORKED
FOR
FEDERAL
AGENCIES?**

What Worked (Agencies)?...

Federal Agencies Went to COOP Sites and Were Back in Business Quickly

- Most Federal Agencies had *Disaster Plans* (and tested them)
- Updated their Websites (very helpful)
- Worked well with Headquarters, NARA, Press, etc. (good communication)

What Worked (Agencies)?...

- Some agencies moved records away from harm:
 - Up state
 - To more secure buildings or off the first floor – or off the top floor (NASA and VA)
 - Away from windows
 - Clean desk policies
 - Backed up data and moved offsite

**WHAT
DIDN'T
WORK
FOR
FEDERAL
AGENCIES?**

What Didn't Work (Agencies)?...

- Some tried to dry out their own records – for weeks and even months
- Some stored back up data (tapes) with nearby data storage companies
- Some found that they needed more information at their COOP site (want to digitize records in future)
- SF-135's (transmittal of records sent to FRC's) – don't keep them with the records. One agency had thousands of boxes damaged – including the SF-135's – so it was difficult to figure out what they had. Now they scan them.
- Only keep needed records onsite and move inactive – but needed – records offsite.

**WHAT
WORKED
FOR
NARA?**

What Worked (NARA)?...

- NARA's Website Updated to Have Disaster Related Information (www.archives.gov)

The screenshot displays the National Archives website layout. On the left, the logo reads 'THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES ARCHIVES.GOV' with the tagline 'Democracy Starts Here.' Below this are two main navigation sections: 'WHAT WE DO' with links for 'About the National Archives', 'Locations/Visit Us', 'Calendar of Events', 'National Archives News', and 'Support the Archives'; and 'EXPLORE & INTERACT' with links for 'National Archives Experience', 'America's Historical Documents', 'Online Exhibits', and 'Presidential Libraries'. The central content area features a video player at the top with a map of the United States and the text 'is your tool to find descriptions of documents, images of documents, and their locations in the National Archives.' Below the video is a 'NEWS AND EVENTS' section. The first news item, accompanied by a book icon, states 'The National Archives publishes a new guide to World War II records.' The second news item, with an information icon, announces 'The Rotunda and the National Archives Experience in Washington, DC, will close at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 16. The last admission will be at 3:30 p.m.' Below this is a section for 'Records Emergency Information' with a globe icon and the text 'emergency response and recovery helps save records.' To the right of the news is a 'Most Requested' section listing 'Military Service Records', 'Declaration of Independence', 'Constitution of the United States', 'World War II Photos', 'Genealogy/Getting Started', and 'Recovering from Disaster', with a 'See More' link. On the far right, a green sidebar titled 'ARCHIVES.GOV FOR...' lists user groups: 'General Public', 'Genealogists/Family Historians', 'Veterans and their Families', 'Educators and Students', 'Researchers', 'Records Managers', 'Preservation and Archives Professionals', 'Information Security Specialists', 'Federal Employees', 'Members of Congress', and 'Press/Journalists'. At the bottom right, there are two promotional banners: one for 'THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES EXPERIENCE' and 'UNLOCK THE DIGITAL VAULTS', and another for 'Democracy STARTS HERE' with a 'watch the video' button.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES ARCHIVES.GOV
Democracy Starts Here.

WHAT WE DO

- [About the National Archives](#)
- [Locations/Visit Us](#)
- [Calendar of Events](#)
- [National Archives News](#)
- [Support the Archives](#)

EXPLORE & INTERACT

- [National Archives Experience](#)
- [America's Historical Documents](#)
- [Online Exhibits](#)
- [Presidential Libraries](#)

is your tool to find descriptions of documents, images of documents, and their locations in the National Archives.

NEWS AND EVENTS

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- **Records Emergency Information** - emergency response and recovery helps save records.

Most Requested

- [Military Service Records](#)
- [Declaration of Independence](#)
- [Constitution of the United States](#)
- [World War II Photos](#)
- [Genealogy/Getting Started](#)
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[See More](#)

ARCHIVES.GOV FOR...

- [General Public](#)
- [Genealogists/Family Historians](#)
- [Veterans and their Families](#)
- [Educators and Students](#)
- [Researchers](#)
- [Records Managers](#)
- [Preservation and Archives Professionals](#)
- [Information Security Specialists](#)
- [Federal Employees](#)
- [Members of Congress](#)
- [Press/Journalists](#)

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES EXPERIENCE
UNLOCK THE DIGITAL VAULTS

Democracy STARTS HERE watch the video



What Worked (NARA)?...

- Post Katrina – we quickly developed close relationship with FEMA and GSA – and it continues to this day. *“FEMA now says that they have discovered records and understand that they are important.”*
- Increased contacts with Federal Executive Boards in Region (share information – meet with them at least once a year)
- Developed closer relationship with Document Recovery Companies (terrific source of information)
- Numerous telecons – sometimes with the White House - kept us focused
- Developed spreadsheets (23 pages long) that summarized the situation at all Federal agency locations. Later expanded to include state and local. GSA was helpful – since they also tracked the condition of the buildings.

**WHAT
DIDN'T
WORK
FOR
NARA?**

What Didn't Work (NARA)?...

- Really needed more information on our Federal agencies, i.e., address, POC, telephone numbers (including alternate numbers), e-mail addresses
- Often NARA didn't know what records the agencies had at a given location, i.e., permanent, vital, computer information, etc.

**MEANWHILE...
STATE & LOCAL
RECORDS
AND THE
ORLEANS PARISH
RECORDS RECOVERY**

- Not Under NARA's Responsibility – but....
 - NARA took on FEMA Mission Assignment to help Orleans Parish (Coroner's Office; District Attorney; and Clerk of the Criminal Court)
 - 5 Truck Loads of Wet and Moldy Records – Vacuum Dried
 - NARA committed 4 staff members to 18 staff days in Orleans Parish





Wet, moldy records on the floor. Paths had to be cleared to start work.



Wet or damp and very moldy records everywhere



Records were often found in heaps



Contractor pulls records from Courthouse for triage.



Computer records were also salvaged in this project



Barbara Rust Removes Hard Drives (above)



**WHAT IS NARA-
SOUTHWEST
REGION
(FORT WORTH)
DOING
TO
HELP?**

Records Center:

- 1.4 million cubic feet of records of Federal agencies in Region
- 100 Federal agencies store records here
- We have moved to a new facility in Fort Worth – 205,000 s.f.



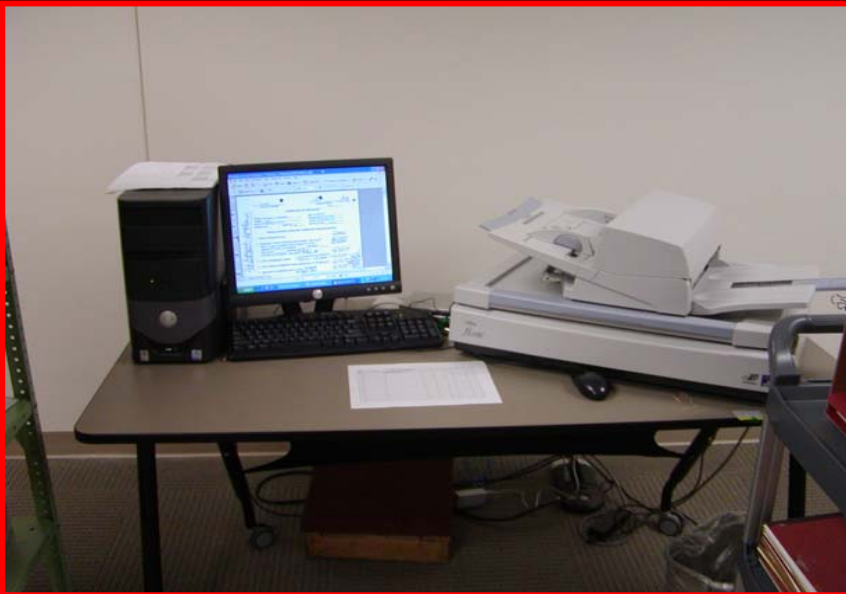
New Facility Dedicated 2007

Records Center:

- Electronic Records Storage Vault (ERV) for media storage (back-up tapes, tape rotation, etc.)
- Environmental monitoring
- FM200 Fire Suppression System
- Secure (each item is tracked)



Records Center: (Scanning Federal Agency records – New Service)



- One of the 1st scanning locations for NARA in the Regions
- DOE, DOJ, Indian Tribes, NAVY, Courts, etc.
- New facility has a large, well-equipped 2,000 s.f. lab

Records Center: (Shredding Computer Records – New Service)

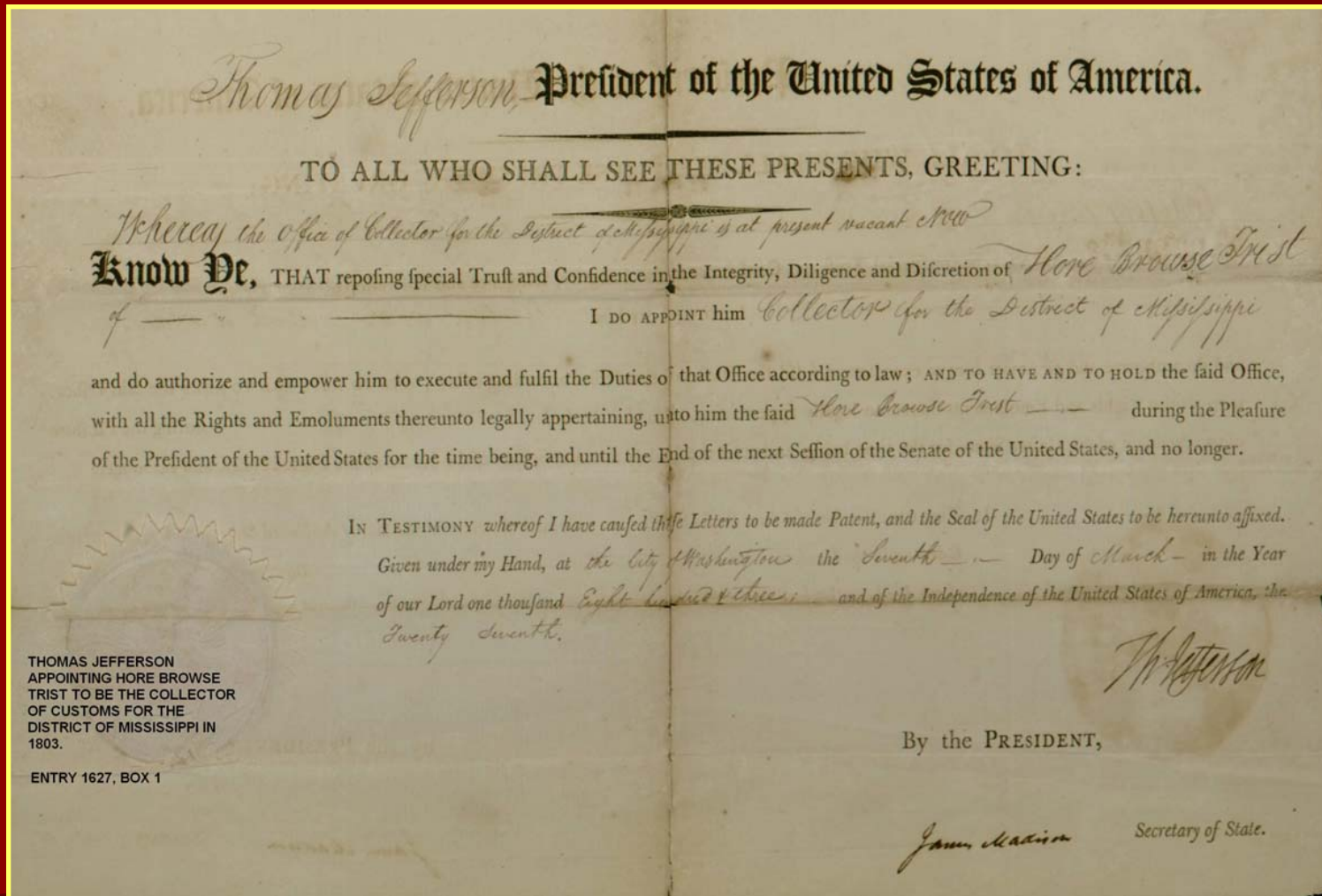


Records Management (helping agencies prepare):



- Records Management Workshops (onsite and around the Region)
- Consultations (briefings, advising, targeted assistance)
- All records – e-mail, historical, etc. (how long to keep, etc.)

Archives (some historical records scanned):



- 1803 Document from New Orleans Customs House signed by President Thomas Jefferson and Secretary of State James Madison

(Questions?)

- www.archives.gov (Website)
- C. Preston Huff – 817-551-2001 or e-mail at preston.huff@nara.gov

