



National Archives and Records Administration

700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20408-0001

USER GROUP MEETING
National Archives at College Park, MD
Friday, August 27, 2010
1:00 p.m.

(10:00 a.m. meeting held at the National Archives Building, Washington, DC)

OPENING

Michael J. Kurtz, Assistant Archivist Office for Record Services - Washington, DC (NW) welcomed everyone to the User Group meeting. Six researchers attended.

AGENDA

1. Research Room Security Issues (Michael Kurtz)

In the past fiscal year, there have been ten incidences of copies and original records being mixed together. We are taking steps to protect the original records, researchers, and staff by using green bags for copies of records and researchers' notes that are taken out of the research rooms.

a) Research Room Green Bags

Researchers' use of green bags will be mandatory in both buildings. Diane Dimkoff is ordering more green bags for Archives I and II and hopes to implement their universal use within the next six weeks. Our goal is to provide better customer service and better security. Use of the green bags will allow researchers an easy and quick exit out of the building because personal notes and copies of records will not be checked twice, as previously done. Note that personal items will be stamped.

National Archives (NARA) staff will be checking the contents of the green bags before they are locked and leave the research rooms. Presenting Security with the locked green bags will diminish the time researchers stand in line at the guard station before exiting the building. Security will need to check only the items that are not in the locked green bags. We are working with the guards to insure that the checkout process runs smoothly and efficiently.

b) Public Access PC Paper

To distinguish original records from copies, we want to use colored paper in all of the public access computers and photo copiers; we are experimenting with different colors of paper. We are thinking of using pink paper and would like your thoughts on the color we should use.

USER GROUP MEETING
National Archives at College Park MD
August 26, 2010 at 1:00 p.m.

c) Digital Research Rooms

Digital research rooms will eliminate the need for colored paper or green bags. We have formed working groups on digitization and we value your input.

d) Additional/Other Security Measures

Many of you have given suggestions and ideas and we appreciate your input.

Question: Do you include scanners in the digital research room?

Answer: Yes, details need to be worked out such as fees, etc.

Question: When do you use green bags -- even if there is only one sheet of paper?

Answer: Yes. Personal notes and copies of records will go into the green bags. Presenting Security with the locked green bags will diminish the time researchers stand in line at the guard station before exiting the building, streamlining the entire checkout process.

Question: How can we access a copy of something in a green bag for use in the finding aids room?

Answer: If you need a few pages of your notes, we will stamp them so you can go back and forth. The notes and copies of records must be in a green bag at the end of the day. We will work with you to make sure this process runs smoothly and efficiently.

Feedback: Others use yellow paper.

Answer: Many mentioned yellow paper at the Archives I meeting. Before making a decision, we will test different paper colors on copiers, scanners, etc.

Question: Will you use colored paper if the item is not in the researcher room?

Answer: No

2. National Archives Records Storage/Space Issues (Michael Kurtz)

Although access to records is a high priority, space is at a premium. In the last few years, we have been identifying and moving those records that are used less frequently than others. This will continue in the next few years.

Within three years, the storage areas in the National Archives Main Building and at College Park will be filled to capacity. We are currently planning on building a new Washington National Records Center (WNRC) which will contain three archival storage bays to alleviate the immediate space problem in the Washington, DC area.

We have a team looking into how to implement a *scan-on-demand* system for the Washington National Records Center (WNRC) and other parts of NARA. In this process, rather than shipping a folder back to an agency, we would scan the folder contents and send it online to the

USER GROUP MEETING
National Archives at College Park MD
August 26, 2010 at 1:00 p.m.

agency. We would also use this method of information transfer among the NARA facilities. We intend to scan folder contents, rather than scanning boxes of records.

Feedback: The Maryland State Archives will pdf their material within 24 hours to a week if it is offsite and at no fee.

Answer: Collections on military and pension files are to be integrated with other military files in St. Louis. The plan is to have one central building for all of this. We will not move military service records until we can digitize significant segments; otherwise it is too disruptive. This is in the Fiscal Year 2013 budget request that must go through OMB and Congress.

3. Status of Archives I Building Changes (Michael Kurtz)

Our fiscal year 2011 budget requests 5 million dollars for Archives I alterations. Congress still has this in committee. No changes to the building can be made until we receive the five million dollars needed for the planned changes. Currently, the most recent plan (Plan D) is still in the appropriation process. The request is still being marked up in committee, so the request is not even on the floor of either the House of Representatives or the Senate. I doubt that this request will be in a bill this year. We will probably have a continuing resolution for NARA. Once all funding issues have been resolved, we will proceed with Plan D.

The plan includes changes to the researcher side of the building (Pennsylvania Avenue entrance), which are designed to make the research area and its processes more efficient and effective. The Constitution Avenue side of the building will feature a new area for displaying records relating to our freedom. We hope these new areas will attract a more diverse audience. An orientation area, called *My Archives* will introduce people to the research possibilities. In addition, the Archives Shop will be expanded and there will also be an increase in our public program offerings.

Question: In plan D, is there enough space for the microfilm research room?

Answer: Yes, there is more than enough space; we will continue self-service microfilm.

Question: The compiled military and pension records will not be moved until digitized?

Answer: Correct. One idea we are considering for freeing up space is to digitize the military service and pension records and send the originals to our St. Louis facility. If we decided to do this, we would work on one section of the records at a time and would move them only after we had digitized them. Since this is only one of the options we are considering, the project would not begin for several years.

4. Installation of Wireless Internet (Wi-Fi) at Archives I and II (Diane Dimkoff)

Installation of the Wi-Fi began in July 2010. This fall, any registered researcher will have access. Bill Day, from the NARA Facilities office, is overseeing the project. Archives II will be wired by next Thursday, September 2, 2010. Currently, we are in the testing phase in the Main Building. Please let Diane know if you want to participate in the testing. You may sign up after the meeting.

USER GROUP MEETING
National Archives at College Park MD
August 26, 2010 at 1:00 p.m.

Diane will also hold focus group meetings to discuss security issues, and the use of thumb drives and other portable media.

5. Archives I Microfilm Equipment Test Results (Diane Dimkoff)

Based on the survey results, we selected the Scan Pro 2000. We now need the funding to purchase these.

Question: When will you have money or are you waiting for the renovation?

Answer: We are not sure.

6. Questions and Answers

Question: When you move records, will there be a tracking system for what records are where?

Answer: Yes, we are working on a map for the shifting of records and looking at alternative space. We will keep heavily used records at Archives I and Archives II, and use scan on demand.

Feedback: I'm glad that you have picked the Scan Pro 2000.

Answer: Scan Pro will provide training for staff and researchers.

UPCOMING USER GROUP MEETINGS

- September 29, at 1:00 p.m., Archives II with the Archivist
- October 22, at 1:00 p.m., Archives I
- November 19, at 1:00 p.m., Archives II
- December: No Meeting

Please send agenda items to Diane Dimkoff at diane.dimkoff@nara.gov or Nancy Fortna at nancy.fortna@nara.gov, so that staff can attend to address the issues.

ADJOURNMENT – 1:30 p.m.