BIT BY BIT:
ALABAMA STATE ELECTRONIC RECORDS PROJECT UPDATE

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WELCOME!

Fall 2019 SERI webinars start in September

Morgan Jones-King
South Carolina
Department of Archives and History
SERI ONLINE RECORDINGS

• Managing Digital Content Over Time
  • Identify
  • Select
  • Store
  • Protect
  • Manage
  • Provide access

• https://archives.utah.gov/community/SERI/SERI-resources.html
TODAY’S PRESENTERS

Dorothy Davis
Alabama Department of Archives and History

Rachel Smith
Alabama Department of Archives and History
ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

- Founded in 1901.
- Independent state agency governed by Board of Trustees.
- Board is self-appointing.
- Trustees are confirmed by the Legislature.
2017 ADAH REORGANIZATION

Archives Division

- Collections Section
  - 7 FTE
  - 2 PT retired state employees
- Records Management Section
  - 3 FTE
  - 1 FT grant funded position
- Digital Assets Section
  - 4 FTE
  - 2 PT retired state employees
- Reference Section
  - 5 FTE

Administrative Services Division

- IT Section
  - 2 FTE
ALABAMA STATE RECORDS PROJECT (ASERP)

- Revive our Electronic Records Program.
- Partner with the Office of the Governor.
- Create workflow to manage, preserve, and provide public access to electronic records during Governor Robert Bentley’s two-term administration.
- Process electronic records from Governor Bob Riley’s two-term administration.
- Develop collaborative model for working with other state agencies.
CURRENT ASERP TEAM

- Archives Division
  - Division Director
  - 3 Records Management Archivists
  - 4 Collections Archivists
  - 1 Reference Archivist
  - 1 Digital Assets Archivist
- Administrative Services Division
  - IT Manager
- 1 Grant funded position (new hire started June 4)
- Other Department staff as needed
ASERP TIMELINE AND GOV. BENTLEY’S RESIGNATION

- Started the grant on January 1, 2017.
- Alabama House of Representatives Judiciary Committee released its impeachment investigation report on April 7, 2017.
TRANSITION PERIOD

• Delay in transfer of electronic records from the Governor’s Office due to on-going ethics investigation.

• Received 50 PSTs for 42 staff members from the Office of Information Technology.

• Received electronic records from Office of Rural Development and Office of Broadband Development, sub-offices closed by Gov. Kay Ivey
GOV. RILEY COLLECTION

• 1.87 TB collection
  • Office files
  • Emails
  • Outlook calendars
  • Videos
  • Photographs
RILEY OFFICE FILES

- Item level review
- Similar to processing a manuscript collection
- File renaming
- Privacy concerns
PROCESSING DECISIONS

- Copyrighted materials
- Personal information
- Transitory records
- Drafts
RILEY PHOTOGRAPH FILES

- 1.58 TB
- Lack of records management
- Need to weed
PHOTO WEEDING

- Highly similar images
- Speeches
- Unflattering
- Background individuals
- No clear subject
- Edited
- File formats
- **Weeding Memo**
AUTOMATED TOOLS

- Redact-It
- File Renamer
- Duplicate File Finder
- WinMerge
PRESERVICA

• Digital preservation system
  • Storage
  • Preservation
  • Access
  • Public access site
INTRANET QUORUM

• Governor Riley’s office used IQ his entire two terms
• No transition plan
• Received the server in 2014
• Set up VPN for Lockheed Martin to perform data export
E-MAIL ANALYSIS

- Received 50 pst files representing 42 staff member accounts
- Reviewed the inboxes for:
  - Date ranges
  - Organization system
  - Security concerns
  - Resignation information
  - Personal use
  - Mailing lists
GOV. BENTLEY TRANSMITTALS

- Office of Rural Development and Office of Broadband Development
- Governor’s taskforces
- Photographs and videos
BUILDING CAPACITY

- Policies and procedures
- Numbering system
- Digital storage plan
MEDIA SURVEY PROJECT

• Reviewed previous transmittals to locate legacy media types
• Found 1,954 devices
• Transferred files onto our servers
EXPANDING TO OTHER STATE AGENCIES

- House and Senate Journals
- State publications
GOVERNOR’S OFFICE PARTNERSHIP

• Liaison archivist
• Survey project
SURVEY PROCESS

1. Developed Questions in Advance
2. Agency Records Liaison Sent Email
3. Scheduled Meetings During Legislative Break
4. Conducted in-person interviews of 30 minutes to 1.5 hours
5. Typed notes
6. Analyzed content and process
SURVEY QUESTION EXAMPLES

- Open-ended: Tell me about the work you do in the office.

- Specific Technologies: Do you use Google Docs? Do you text for work?

- Locations: Do you use a laptop for work? Do you save those files just to the laptop?

Survey Questions

1. Tell me a little bit about the work you do in the office. What are the main activities that you perform or your sub-office performs?

2. What types of documents do you produce to complete those activities from day to day? What types of programs do you use to create them? (Word, Excel, etc.)

3. Where do you save those documents? (Are they on a shared drive? Are they saved to your individual computer?)

4. What does your file folder structure look like? Is that structure consistent throughout the sub-office, or does it vary person to person?

5. Does your sub-office have a standard way of naming those files, or does that vary person to person?
SURVEY CONTENT ANALYSIS

- Files saved multiple places
- No standardized naming convention throughout office
- File organization varied widely
- What to do with records on departure
- Not reporting systemic use of personal email
• Needed to update procedural leaflets
• Wanted to tailor these documents to each office
• Our goal was to be concise and relevant

FAQ
Handling and Transferring Public Records to the Archives

1. Why should I learn about handling and transferring public records to the Archives?
Public officials are legally obligated to create and maintain records that adequately document the business of their agencies. By transferring these records to the Archives, state agencies help build a better understanding of our shared history, ensure transparency, and promote good government.

2. What files are transferred to the Archives? When?
The Office of the Governor has a Records Disposition Authority (RDA), which lists records created by the office that are kept permanently. Permanent records are transferred to the Archives at the end of the gubernatorial term. For the policy office, these include:
• Administrative Files of the Policy Office
• Special Project Task Force Files (possibly)

More detail on each permanent record type can be found on page 204 of the RDA.

Note that archivists consider a file to be a record based on its content, not its format. Thus permanent records can be paper or electronic. Things like Word documents, emails, hand-written notes, etc. could all be considered permanent records, depending on their content.

3. Do I need to organize the files in any way?
Whether dealing with paper or electronic records, the use of folders can help with organization.
For electronic records, consider making the highest-level folders correspond with the types of permanent records listed in the RDA. Then create sub-folders based on subject or another organizational approach that works for you. Whatever approach you use, consistency is key.
If your office uses a shared drive, ensure that you are saving records to the appropriate location.
If multiple staff members work in the same folder on the shared drive, make sure that you use the same organizational and naming approach to avoid confusion.

4. For electronic files, do I need to name them in a certain way?
Following a few simple naming conventions makes electronic files easier to find and organize. It also helps protect the files for long-term preservation at the Archives. Use the following tips:
Choose descriptive but concise file names.
Avoid using special characters in file names, such as \* ? " <> | \ & $. $ .
Use underscores instead of spaces in file names.
CURRENT STATE

• 2018 Gubernatorial election

• Next Steps—
  ▪ Finalize electronic records transfer from Gov. Bentley’s administration.
  ▪ Continue processing Gov. Bentley’s photographs and videos.
  ▪ Start processing office files from the Office of Rural Development and Office of Broadband Development.
LESSONS LEARNED

- Partner with multiple agencies.
- Prepare for staff departures in your agency and partner agencies.
- Be realistic about the scope of your grant.
  - How will it balance with other duties?
  - How does it fit in with upcoming projects?
LESSONS LEARNED

• Grant helped us reshape day to day tasks.
  ▪ Improved communications between the sections involved in the grant.
• Embrace just doing something.
• Small victories are still victories.
• Keep moving forward.
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