

About AHA!

History

AHA! was founded in 1998 by four local archivists—Lesley Brunet, Shelly Henley Kelly, Mark Martin, and Geri Schaad— to facilitate interaction among area archivists and repositories. By-laws were adopted and the first officers elected in December 2002, providing a more formal structure for the organization. In its first decade, AHA!'s paid membership has grown to over sixty members.

Mission

Archivists of the Houston Area exists to increase contact and communication among archivists and those working with records, to provide opportunities for professional development, and to promote archival repositories and activities in the greater Houston, Texas area.



Activities

AHA! fulfills its mission by:

- Conducting quarterly meetings with programs on archival topics
- Planning and promoting Archives Month celebrations—usually in October
- Providing professional development classes open to the public
- Maintaining a website (with links to member repositories)
- Participating in a yahoo listserv
- Publishing a newsletter

Membership

AHA! members include professional archivists, records managers, museum curators, researchers, historians, and those interested in the preservation of the historical record.

Anyone interested in the preservation and accessibility of historical records is welcome to join AHA!. Membership dues are \$10.00 per annum. Membership applications are available on the AHA! website.

Archivists of the Houston Area
houstonarchivists.org

Images courtesy of the Harris County Archives, Shelly Henley Kelly, and Joel Draut.



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About Archives

Why Archives?

Archives preserve, protect, and provide access to records of enduring value that document individuals, organizations, and governments.



"Each day that passes is a triumph for an archive, for each day some mere scrap of paper permits justice to prevail...As a rule the papers of a given generation are seldom required after their reception and primary use; but when all personal touch with that period has ceased, then these records assume a startling importance, for they replace hands that have vanished and lips that are sealed."

- Arthur G. Doughty, 1924

What are Archives?

Archives are records created or received by a person, family, or organization and maintained because they contain information of continuing value.

Archivists are trained to determine if a record has continuing value—be it informational, legal, evidential, or artifactual.

Archival records occur in a variety of formats including paper, bound volumes, photographs, film, audio and video recordings, and digital files.

Access to Archives

The collections are described in finding aids, databases and MARC records, which may be available online or in print, depending on the repository. Archivists assist patrons in finding the information they need.

Archives frequently contain fragile and valuable materials. Stacks are closed, and all records must be viewed in-house, under the supervision of the archivist. Collections may also be stored offsite. Therefore, it is wise to contact an archives prior to a visit to determine their research hours and policies.



Donation of Materials

Materials are often received into archives through donations by the public. If you or someone you know has materials believed to be historically valuable, contact a local archives. The archivist will assist you in assessing your records and discussing a possible donation.

Donations to archives are considered to be permanent; archives rarely accept loans of materials.

According to rulings of the Internal Revenue Service, archives are unable to place a monetary value on collections.