Introduction to Arrangement and Description

Presented by
Dr Susan Skudder
SWIM Ltd
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Course overview

Session overview

☐ What is arrangement and description and why do we do it?

☐ Arrangement and description principles

☐ Levels of control and processing

☐ Finding aids
Schematic of archival operations

*Based on a diagram from Fredric M Millar: Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts, p.6*

Records creators
- public agencies/private organisations/individuals

Organisational records and collections of personal papers

Records selection
- Collecting and acquisition policies
- Appraisal

Accessioning

Active preservation

Arrangement

Storage/preservation

Description

Use/reference functions

User communities
- Public, researchers, records creators
What is arrangement and description?

- A process of analysis, identification and organisation
- Purposes of control, retrieval, and access
- A final product which illustrates archival material, its provenance and documentary context, its interrelationships and the ways it can be identified and used

> Luciana Duranti: Origin and Development of the Concept of Archival Description, Archivaria, no. 35, Spring 1993, p. 48

Other definitions

Arrangement:

- ...involves analysing the records to see who or what created them, how and why they were created, what functions and activities they document, when they were created and what their physical nature is ... the process of studying the records to discover how they relate to the entities that created them
  > Basic RAD [http://scaa.sk.ca/rad/section1.htm](http://scaa.sk.ca/rad/section1.htm)

- The process of physically organising records in accordance with the accepted archival principles of provenance and original order
  > Keeping Archives 2nd ed. p.222

- The process of organising and managing historical records by:
  - 1) identifying and bringing together [intellectually] sets of records derived from a common source which have common characteristics and a common file structure, and
  - 2) identifying relationships among such sets of records and their creators
  > Fredric M. Millar Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts, SAA Archival Fundamentals Series 1990, p.7

- The intellectual and physical processes and results of analyzing and organizing documents in accordance with archival principles
  > ISAD(G) 2nd ed., p.10
Description

- The process of explaining that arrangement so that people - researchers, administrators, whomever - who want to use the records know where to look to find the answers to their questions
  » Basic RAD http://scaa.sk.ca/rad/section1.htm

- The process of recording information about the nature and content of the records in archival custody. The description identifies such features as provenance, arrangement, format and contents, and presents them in a standardised form
  » Keeping Archives, 2nd ed. p. 223

- The process of capturing, collating, analyzing, controlling, exchanging, and providing access to information about:
  1) the origin, context, and provenance of different sets of records
  2) their filing structure
  3) their form and content
  4) their relationship with other records, and
  5) the ways in which they can be found and used
  » Fredric M. Millar Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts, SAA Archival Fundamentals Series 1990, p.7

- The creation of an accurate representation of a unit of description and its component parts, if any, by capturing, analyzing, organizing and recording information that serves to identify, manage, locate and explain archival materials and the context and records systems which produced it
  » ISAD(G) 2nd ed., p.10
Arrangement and description is the means of establishing physical and intellectual control over archives so that they are accessible and usable.

‘Knowledge of the circumstances of creation and use... must be documented when the record moves into an environment where it is joined with records emanating from other creating environments, different systems, and other business processes...Records have stewards who are unfamiliar with the arrangements in which the records were generated and it is necessary to distinguish records belonging to one process from records belonging to another’.¹

‘The purpose of archival systems is to ensure that records are preserved in the context of their creation and use, and retain their qualities as evidence so that when retrieved for future use their meaning and significance can be understood’.²

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Schematic of arrangement and description

**ACCESSIONING**
- Records selection
  - On-site boxing and listing
  - Physical reception
    - Analysis of physical nature and substantive contents
    - Identification of provenance
      - Container listing and summary description
  - Administrative/legal transfer
    - Separation by physical form

**ARRANGEMENT**
- Decision to process collection
- Decisions about nature and level of detail of arrangement
  - Preliminary research
    - Arrangement
      - Identify series of records and their system of arrangement

**DESCRIPTION**
- Decisions about nature and level of description
- Collecting, collating, analysing and linking information about the records creators and information about the records
  - Entering information into an integrated internal descriptive system (creator descriptions, series descriptions, inventories)
- Publishing descriptions
- Describing records in national systems

**USE**

Based on a diagram from Fredric M Millar: Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts, p.7
Principles of arrangement and description

Provenance
The principle of provenance refers to the origin of the records: the organisation, person or office that created, received or accumulated and used the records in the conduct of business or personal life.

The principle of provenance is about preserving ‘the relationship between records and the organizations or individuals that created, accumulated, and/or maintained and used them in the conduct of personal or corporate activity’.

The principle of provenance means that the records of one organisation or person should not be intermingled with the records of others. We respect the context of the records (their links to the purpose, functions and activities of their creators) because that context helps us understand the records.

Original order
Records should be maintained in the order in which they were originally kept when in active use. To re-organise them according to some imposed order (e.g. subject or date) risks obscuring their meaning and destroying the ‘story’ that the original accumulation tells.

‘The principle of original order is about maintaining the ordering and grouping of records used by the creating organization or individual so that they reliably reflect the creator’s business and recordkeeping activities. Keeping records in an archival environment according to these principles maintains their authenticity, integrity and reliability’.

‘The original order does not have to be neat, easily understandable or obviously meaningful to be retained. If an order has been imposed by the person or body whose papers they originally were this must be retained, for to do otherwise will destroy meaning in the material which may not be readily apparent…’

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Levels of control/levels of processing

A&D processes include the physical management of records as well as the application of intellectual control at various levels or degrees of detail.

1. Accessioning to provide basic control
   - May include separation of specific physical formats because they must be stored separately (e.g. photographs, maps, plans)
   - Should include identification of provenance – the records of several creators could be transferred in one accession
   - Level of control is normally at the ‘collection’ level, as an ‘accession’
   - May include checking of accession lists to ensure that what has been transferred physically matches the list of what is supposed to be transferred (if the records are physical)
   - There may be/should be container lists but this does not mean the level of control is at the item level because the collection/accession is still described at collection level in terms of attributing provenance, and series have not been identified.

2. Further processing of an accession:
   - Preliminary research into provenance
   - Preliminary examination of records as an accession (collection of records from the same source), without disturbing original order
     - Identify types of records
     - Content of records
     - Date ranges
     - Manner of arrangement

3. Determining which, if any, of the archives in this accession will be managed/described/controlled at more than the accession level (according to your institution’s A&D programme and priorities and standards of description)

4. Development of agency/creator series descriptions and possible listing and/or reboxing of each series.

This is a very brief outline of what might be involved in A&D processing.

In-house or institutional archives may receive regular accessions of records from series already held by the archives created in contexts that are already documented by the archives. Therefore the physical processing of the new accession of records might in fact be minimal, and the processing itself might not involve very much actual examination of the records and more examination of transfer lists and other documentation about the records.

Regular transfers from a creator are less likely to happen in a collecting archives, where ‘entire’ collections may be acquired from an organisation or an individual, which may not be well documented, so that examination of the actual collection may be required to identify provenance and then to identify specific series.
**Accessioning**

**Definition of ACCESSION**
"(n.) A group of records or archives from the same source taken into archival custody at the same time. (v.) The process of formally accepting and recording the receipt of records into archival custody.


Accessioning is the means by which an archival institution gains physical and intellectual control over incoming archival material. It is the process by which you record what you have received, where from, and how much, and where you have put it in the archives storage area.

*It is the minimum level of control and should ALWAYS be applied to each new transfer/donation/acquisition of records*

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**Accessioning**

- What do you need to do to have basic physical and intellectual control over archives?
- What information about the archives do you need for this basic control?
Accession register

Accession number
Provenance statement
Description
Date range
Quantity
Location
Access conditions

And….?

Physical control of archives

Traditionally accessioning is when the first physical location controls are applied to archives in an archival institution. When further arrangement and description processes are undertaken on the records there may be changes to the physical storage of some items and thus changes to their physical control.

The most important tool for managing physical archives, aside from the accession register, is the location guide.

The location guide tells you:
• Where are they?
• How many are they?

Other physical management considerations:
• What format are the records, and does this make a difference to where they are held?
  ○ You may need to physically store particular formats in a different environment from other parts of the accession, e.g. film, objects, maps and plans

• How do you manage the links between items of different format from the same accession, series or even item that require different storage?
  ○ You could use separation sheets in paper files to indicate removal of a photo, for example.
Managing the A&D programme

It is not usually possible or even desirable to process every accession to the same level/degree of detail, because of:
- Time
- Resources
- Institutional policy on descriptive and processing standards and levels

Therefore you need to prioritise what accessions get further arrangement and description processing.

Criteria for prioritising across the institution:

- Organisational priorities: are there particular groups of records that your institution considers the most important to process?
- Relationship to other holdings – will the records assist in the use and/or understanding of other records in your holdings?
- Research use – is there likely to be a research demand for these records?
- Size/complexity – will one processing job take all your A&D resources for some time?
- Conservation requirements – are the records damaged/deteriorating and thus need priority processing?

A collecting archive may have a very different way of establishing priorities from an in-house archives which receives regular transfers of records from series already held by the archives created in contexts already documented by the archives.

Criteria for prioritising within a ‘collection’:

- Context before content (i.e. provenance before series work, although the records themselves may add to your understanding of the context in which they were created)
- Controlling before controlled (indexes before what is indexed)
- Most important to least important
- Most revealing to least
Working with provenance

‘The only correct basis of arrangement is exposition of the administrative objects which the archives originally served.’\textsuperscript{6}

‘Archives, being the organic products of continuing work or life activities, can only be fully understood through a knowledge of why and how they were created and used over time’\textsuperscript{7}

\textbf{Researching context}

What do you need to know to usefully describe the creator of the records so that the description helps to understand the creator’s work and the records that were created?

How do you find that out?

\textsuperscript{6} Sir Hilary Jenkinson, A Manual of Archive Administration, p.97
\textsuperscript{7} Keeping Archives, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed., p. 223
Working with original order

The order in which records and archives were kept in active use, i.e. the order of accumulation as they were created, maintained and used. The principle of original order requires that the original order be preserved or reconstructed unless, after detailed examination, the original order is identified as a totally haphazard accumulation making the records irretrievable (but not an odd, unorderly or difficult arrangement). (*Keeping Archives*, p. 475)

The most useful and achievable level of description below that of accession or ‘collection’ is series level; that is records that have been brought together in the course of their active life to form a discrete sequence.
More definitions of series

- A body of file units or documents arranged in accordance with a unified filing system or maintained as a unit by the organisation or individual that created them because of some other relationship arising out of their creation, function, receipt, physical form or use
  » Fredric M. Millar, p.7

- A group of records which result from the same business or recordkeeping activity, have a common system of control or relate to a particular subject or function, have a similar format, or have another relationship arising out of their creation, receipt or use
  » Describing Archives in Context: A Guide to Australasian Practice, ASA Committee on Descriptive Standards, p.7
Identifying series

Format does not matter, content and context do matter:
‘a series is only determined by form when items of the same form have been put together as a result of their creation, receipt or use.’

Describing series

What information do you need to know about a series so that you can create a description that helps others understand the context and the content of the records?

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8 Keeping Archives, 2nd. ed. P.232
What is an ‘item’?

What is an item?

☐ The smallest discrete unit of record material which accumulates to form a series (i.e., a file or part file in a series of files; a volume in a series of volumes)
  ☐ Keeping Archives, 2nd ed. p. 473

☐ An individual record unit
  ☐ Describing Archives in Context: A Guide to Australasian Practice, ASA Committee on Descriptive Standards, p. 7
Series identification exercise

This is a portion of the initial listing of the records of the Art Gallery and Museum Association of New Zealand (AGMANZ)

The records had been packed in cartons. When they were listed, each carton was assigned a letter and the items were listed in the order in which they were found in the cartons. The cartons themselves were in no particular order.

This list contains several different series of records. Go through the list and identify the different series.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box Ref.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B 29</td>
<td>Newsletters, No 7</td>
<td>1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 30</td>
<td>Ditto No 2 – 5</td>
<td>1953-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 1</td>
<td>Agendas, minutes, correspondence</td>
<td>1969 - 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 2</td>
<td>Correspondence re publication Art Galleries and Museums of N.Z.</td>
<td>1969 – 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 3</td>
<td>Account Ledger</td>
<td>1949 – 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 4</td>
<td>Financial correspondence, receipts and cheques, Photographs</td>
<td>1969 – 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 5</td>
<td>ICS/E articles</td>
<td>1970 – 71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 6</td>
<td>14 rolls of negatives (Kodak 120x12) of provincial art gallery buildings (unidentified): 1 roll of one person</td>
<td>n.d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 7</td>
<td>Postage stamp expense books (4)</td>
<td>1959 – 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 8</td>
<td>Receipt books (3)</td>
<td>1971 – 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 9</td>
<td>Petty Cash book</td>
<td>1972 – 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 10</td>
<td>Unused book of account forms: Cheque stubs</td>
<td>Dec 1971 - Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>Folder: Museum training in N.Z.</td>
<td>1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>Folder: J.R. McKenzie Trust Board Correspondence</td>
<td>1965 – 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>Folder: W.J. Le Couteur correspondence</td>
<td>1959 – 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>Folder: Museum opening hours</td>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>Folder: Historic house museums</td>
<td>1948; 1960 – 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 6</td>
<td>Folder: Interpol circulars</td>
<td>1967 – 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 7</td>
<td>Folder: Correspondence re handbooks</td>
<td>1957 – 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 8</td>
<td>Folder: Gregg’s Reports</td>
<td>1967 – 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 9</td>
<td>Folder: ICOM Circulars, rules and correspondence</td>
<td>1969 – 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 10</td>
<td>Folder: ICOM agendas</td>
<td>1970 – 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 11</td>
<td>Folder: Gift duty &amp; income tax – circulars and correspondence</td>
<td>1959 – 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 12</td>
<td>Folder: Freeze-drying report</td>
<td>1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 13</td>
<td>Folder: Frances Hodgkins Fellowship correspondence</td>
<td>1964 – 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 14</td>
<td>Folder: Exhibitions, insurance and freight</td>
<td>1963 – 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 15</td>
<td>Folder: Employment opportunities in art gallery and museums</td>
<td>1966 – 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 16</td>
<td>Folder: Munro Report</td>
<td>1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 19</td>
<td>Folder: Commonwealth Foundation: correspondence</td>
<td>1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 20</td>
<td>Folder: Council meetings: minutes</td>
<td>1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 21</td>
<td>Folder: N.Z. Archaeological Assoc. conservation</td>
<td>1963 – 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 22</td>
<td>Folder: Capital grants</td>
<td>1966 – 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Folder Description</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 25</td>
<td>Folder: Art Gallery Extension Service Minutes and correspondence</td>
<td>1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 26</td>
<td>Folder: Arms Act 1959 – corresp.</td>
<td>1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 27</td>
<td>Folder: Art galleries of Australia – circulars and correspondence</td>
<td>1959 – 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 28</td>
<td>Folder: American Assoc. of Museums – correspondence</td>
<td>1959 – 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 29</td>
<td>Folder: AGMANZ Newsletters</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 30</td>
<td>Envelope: ASPAC – correspondence and copy Act</td>
<td>1968 – 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 31</td>
<td>Folder: Agricultural museums – correspondence and descriptions</td>
<td>1959 – 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 32</td>
<td>Folder: AGMANZ Newsletters</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 33</td>
<td>Folder: AGMANZ Newsletters. No 41 – 45</td>
<td>1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 34</td>
<td>Folder: Ford Foundation – correspondence</td>
<td>1962 – 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 35</td>
<td>Folder: Gulbenkian Foundation – correspondence</td>
<td>1963 – 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 36</td>
<td>Folder: AGMANZ correspondence</td>
<td>1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 37</td>
<td>Newspaper: Feature on carillon</td>
<td>24 Apr 1076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E 1</td>
<td>Correspondence, Auckland Museum – AGMANZ</td>
<td>1951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E 2</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>1963 – 64</td>
</tr>
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<td>E 3</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>1950</td>
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<td>E 4</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>1949</td>
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<td>E 5</td>
<td>Newsletters</td>
<td>Dec 1966 – May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Dates</td>
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<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>E 6</td>
<td>Newsletters</td>
<td>1961 – 65</td>
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<td>E 7</td>
<td>Newsletters</td>
<td>Mar 1965 – Nov</td>
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<td>E 8</td>
<td>Newsletters</td>
<td>1952 – 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E 9</td>
<td>Correspondence, Keith Thompson to AGMANZ</td>
<td>1972 – 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E 10</td>
<td>Correspondence, Keith Thompson to AGMANZ</td>
<td>1973 – 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E 11</td>
<td>Correspondence and Council agendas</td>
<td>1973 – 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 1</td>
<td>AGMANZ News</td>
<td>1966 – 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 2</td>
<td>AGMANZ News</td>
<td>Nov 69, Aug 1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 3</td>
<td>Minutes and agenda ( 2 items)</td>
<td>Apr 1970, Nov 1971</td>
</tr>
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<td>H 4</td>
<td>Minutes of AGMANZ, Wanganui</td>
<td>19-20 Mar 1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 5</td>
<td>Annual reports</td>
<td>1950 – 68</td>
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<td>H 6</td>
<td>AGMANZ News</td>
<td>Feb 1970</td>
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<tr>
<td>H 7</td>
<td>Interpol circulars on thefts</td>
<td>Sep 1974 – Apr 1976</td>
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<td>H 8</td>
<td>Interpol circulars on thefts</td>
<td>1974 – 75; Apr 1976</td>
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<td>H 9</td>
<td>Interpol circulars on thefts</td>
<td>Feb – Mar 1975</td>
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<tr>
<td>H 10</td>
<td>Loose newspaper cuttings</td>
<td>1974</td>
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<td>H 10 – 11</td>
<td>2 cards (orange)</td>
<td>n.d</td>
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<td>H 11</td>
<td>Scrapbook</td>
<td>May 1971 – Sep 1971</td>
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<td>H 12</td>
<td>Travelling – Art Council Grant</td>
<td>1965-67</td>
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<td>H 13</td>
<td>Training &amp; post-primary studentships</td>
<td>1961-68</td>
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<tr>
<td>H 14</td>
<td>Taxidermy appointment</td>
<td>1959 – 63</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N. Z Science review</td>
<td>1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 15</td>
<td>Future of art galleries – Sutch</td>
<td>1962 – 65</td>
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<tr>
<td>H 16</td>
<td>School of Curators</td>
<td>1966 – 67</td>
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<td>H 17</td>
<td>Salaries file</td>
<td>1954 – 62</td>
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<tr>
<td>H 18</td>
<td>Relationships of Amateur Societies to AGMANZ</td>
<td>Feb 1967</td>
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<td>H 19</td>
<td>AGAMANZ – Professional admin</td>
<td>1967 – 68</td>
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<td>H 20</td>
<td>Photographic charges</td>
<td>1965</td>
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<td>H 21</td>
<td>Ornithological Society</td>
<td>1964</td>
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<td>H 22</td>
<td>Official yearbook</td>
<td>1963 – 1969</td>
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<td>H 25</td>
<td>Dept. of Defence</td>
<td>June 1968</td>
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<td>H 26</td>
<td>Natural history</td>
<td>1953 – 63, 1967</td>
</tr>
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<td>H 27</td>
<td>National research Advisory Council</td>
<td>1963 – 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 28</td>
<td>Nature Conservation Council (map)</td>
<td>1962 – 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 29</td>
<td>Museum statistics</td>
<td>1951- 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 30</td>
<td>Salaries file</td>
<td>1953 – 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salaries report</td>
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<tr>
<td>H 31</td>
<td>Museum Education Service</td>
<td>1966 – 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H 33</td>
<td>Membership and correspondence (art galleries and museums)</td>
<td>1965 - 68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finding aids (or descriptive tools)

‘Archival description is fundamentally a process of communicating information about sets of records to their potential users...The foundation of the whole system is the collective description in various descriptive tools, or finding aids, of the different sets of records identified [and ordered] during arrangement.’

Definitions

1. The descriptive media, published and unpublished, manual or electronic, created by an archives or an archival program, to establish physical and intellectual control over records and other holdings. Finding aids lead both archives staff and users to the information they are seeking from or about archives

2. The registers, indexes and filing system guides produced by the agency or person who created the records, also referred to as control records or contemporaneous finding aids

Levels of description

Just as there are levels of control and processing to achieve this level of control (accession, series, item), there are also levels of description.

Determining how you will describe the records to users has a bearing on how you will process them – so if you were setting up an archives you should make some decisions about the type of finding aids you would have at the same time as you are making decisions about the levels of processing you will undertake.

Description is a case of ‘progressive refinement’ – all description moves in the same direction – from the general to the particular. As with processing, you don’t have to describe everything to the same level, but there should be a minimum level of description for everything.

Planning for the finding aids you will have in an archives institution is similar (and related to) planning for processing levels – it is dependent upon resources (staff, time) as well as on considerations of the nature of the archives held, the users, and the level of interest/use of the archives, which may change over time.

Given that the series is the heart of the descriptive process, it follows that an ideal level of description is at the series level.

Is a series inventory a series level description or an item level description?

What is an item level description?

9 Fredric M. Miller, Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts, SAA Archival Fundamental Series, 1990, p. 79
Types of finding aids

Description – finding aids

- Types of finding aids:
  - Internal to archives institution
    - Mainly used for control and retrieval rather than access
  - Internal developed by archives institution for assistance of users
  - General guides to holdings
    - At state/national/international level, contributed to by institutions
Internal to archives institution
  - Location guide/repository management system
  - Accession register
  - Accession lists (aka preliminary inventory)
    » Mainly used for control and retrieval rather than access:

Internal developed by archives institution for assistance of users
  - Collection guides/summary guides
  - Guides to the finding aids
  - Agency descriptions
  - Series descriptions
  - Series inventories
  - **Supplementary** finding aids
    » Subject guides and background information compiled from source analyses, secondary sources and reference enquiries:
      • Subject guides
      • Subject indexes
      • Function descriptions/indexes/lists
      • Chronological indexes
      • Media guides; e.g. guide to photographic holdings

General guides:
  - Broader than one institution:
    » National
    » International
  - Can be general guides to holdings or specific to a type of archive or a format

Control records produced by creating agencies:
  - Registers
  - Indexes
  - File classification plans
  - Procedures manuals
  - Metadata schema/standards
  - Thesauri/controlled vocabularies
Arrangement and description exercise

Public University, a major repository for donated records and personal papers in addition to the records of Public University, has decided to publish a guide to holdings. You are directing the guide project, and several student aides are writing the guide entries. One day you are working on the section of the guide on manuscript collections, which include both donated personal papers and donated records. You come upon the following descriptions.

Answer the following questions for each entry:

1. Is this the most accurate and appropriate description these collections of records could have?
2. What other description could you give the records collections?

A. PAPERS OF PENELope PARKE, 1866-1940. HISTORICAL RECORDS
The greater part of this collection consists of the historical collection of Penelope Parke, including journals, ledgers, and other account books of the Shenandoah Gas Company, Roanoke, Virginia, covering functions prior to 1920; records of Peter Parke, Washington County, Virginia; minutes, payroll book, cash book and other records of the Golden Valley Creamery association and its member groups (which was a co-operative functioning from 1908-1910); some 19th century military post records

B. PAPERS OF ARTHUR ENGLEWOOD, 1836-1904. LETTERS 1836-1904
Letters to F.B. Croft and carbon copies of Croft’s replies, relating to forestry and the paper products industry.

C. RECORDS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DEPRESSION GLASS, 1971
The ICDG met at Public University on July 14-15 1971. Material includes brochures on the university and the local area, distributed to participants; university correspondence on parking permits; list of officers of the IDCG; sample place card from the luncheon July 15, 1971; and a photograph of Griselda Glass, Chairperson, with the university president. ¹⁰

¹⁰ From Trudy Huskamp Peterson, SAA Basic Archival Workshop Manual
**Key points**

- ALWAYS create an accession record
- Develop policies/criteria for deciding what to process further
- Decide on your descriptive levels and your primary finding aids before starting A&D processing
- NEVER reorganise records