



Archive Guidelines

What is an Archive?

An archive is a repository for unique records of continuing value. Records housed in archives are often one of a kind or at least are very difficult to replace if lost, stolen, or destroyed. It is not necessarily the age of the records that give them their value but rather the content and research potential of the documents that merit their preservation in an archive. Archives are designed to provide users with access to the records while maintaining a stable environment for their protection.

Records are often kept in collections, which are a grouping of related material that are most often created, by a single individual or organization. Collections can range in size from a single sheet of paper to thousands of feet of material. (feet is the measurement used in libraries to measure the space occupied by boxes or box etc.)

The University of Texas at San Antonio Special Collections and Archives Department is available to preserve and make available records of historical, legal, fiscal, and/or administrative value to the community. (Tables in the north could consider Denton for their archives.)

Guidelines

The following guidelines will assist members of an organization (PART Table) in identifying files that are appropriate to transfer to the archives (Pan American Round Tables of Texas Archives).

Focus

Archive material that details the activities of a club that are documented in newsletters and flyers, relationships revealed through correspondence, and attitudes about events and society that come out in board minutes. All of this information is the stuff of history and fascinating reading. The media and formats of the records vary. Information can be stored on paper, magnetic tape, CD Rom, photographs, videotape, sketches and drawings.

Items to be transferred include:

- **Official records:** constitutions and by-laws, mission statement, minutes and proceedings, lists of officers and members.
- **Office files:** Correspondence and memoranda (incoming and outgoing) and files concerning projects, activities and functions. (Scrapbooks)
- **Historical files:** documenting policies, decisions, committee and task force reports
- **Publications: one record** copy of all programs, journals, newsletter, brochures, posters, and announcements issued by the organization
- **Audio-visual aids:** photographs, tapes, video recordings and film
- **Personal papers of members:** if related directly to the organization's work.

Archive Guidelines

Records NOT to be transferred to the Archives include:

- Records of specific financial and membership transactions
- Requests for publications or information after the requests have been filled
- All blank forms and unused printed and duplicated materials
- All duplicate material: keep only the original copy and annotated copies
- Papers, reports, work paper, and drafts which have been published
- Replies to questionnaires if the results are recorded and preserved either in the archives or in a published report.

General Comments

Label and date everything, especially photographs and reports.

Newspaper clipping should be photocopied. Everything else should be kept in the original format.

Photographs are best as true photographs – not digital copies. The original format will last longer than the copies made on photo paper

Ink jet copies are bad because the ink runs if it gets wet and the ink fades over time. Laser copies are better.

Keep stored records in an area with little fluctuation of temperature and humidity (Not basement, attic or garage).

Practice good housekeeping - bugs like to eat the sizing on paper, the emulsion on photographs and use the paper to make nests.

Materials should be transferred in the order in which the records' creator maintained them.

An inventory of the contents (folder titles) and a note briefly describing the activity to which they relate should accompany the transfer.

To ask questions about retention or disposal of specific record, please contact the Amy Rushing, Head of Special Collections, UTSA (210) 458-5984 or email at specialcollections@utsa.edu.

If a Round Table is going to donate its materials to an archive - don't buy the acid free boxes. If they are going to keep them in someone's house - then it is good to invest in the acid free supplies. If money is scarce, there are acid free cubic foot boxes that can be bought. At least there is one good box to put lots of things in.

When the collections are donated - depending on the archive, like TWU and UTSA, but not necessarily the State or UT Austin, they will process the collections and put them in acid free folder and boxes. It might take years for a collection to be processed (Texas State Archives) and so collections might sit in temporary boxes for a while and in that situation, it's best if you send the material in acid free boxes.

Archive Guidelines

Another location appropriate for Pan American Round Table archives:

Woman's Collection
Blagg-Huey Library
Texas Woman's University
P.O. Box 425528
Denton, TX 76204
Phone: (940) 898-3751
Fax: (940) 898-3745
E-mail address: womansc@twu.edu

Best Contact:

Dawn Letson, MLS
Assistant Director of Libraries for Special Collections
Director of the Woman's Collection and Assistant Director of Libraries for Materials
Processing and Special Collections at TWU Woman's Collection since 1991.
DLetson@twu.edu
Phone: 940-898-3754

The PART of Texas archives are housed at UTSA's Main Campus and must be accessed via the John Peace Library Special Collections reading room. An online summary can be found at:

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utsa/00122/utsa-00122.html>

[Return to State Archives.....](#)

[Return to PARTT homepage....](#)