

◆ A C A N e w s ◆

Issue 31

April 1998

May 1
Deadline for "You Pick Your Site"

May 15
Deadline for requesting 1998 test applications

June 1
Test applications, supporting documents, and fees must be post-marked by midnight tonight.

June 1
Deadline for receipt of recertification petition forms

July 1
Annual dues of US\$50 due today.

Sept 2
Examination given today in Orlando, Washington, St. Louis, Austin, and your town!

Sept 4
You are cordially invited to our annual business luncheon in Orlando, Florida.

First study guide

The Academy of Certified Archivists has published its first study guide.

The *Handbook for Archival Certification* includes test procedures, guidelines for applying, and new sample questions.

The new questions were taken from retired questions used in previous examinations.

The *Handbook for Archival Certification* also includes extensive discussion of the sample questions. The discussion includes statistics for how questions tested in previous examinations and an analysis of what those statistics demonstrate about the usefulness and efficacy of the questions. The handbook then explains the archival principles and published sources supporting each sample question.

The handbook also includes the Academy's first reading list. It was drawn from the sources used to con-

struct the examination questions and notes the publications most frequently reflected in the test.

The *Handbook for Archival Certification* is available for US \$10.00 (plus US \$2.50 s/h).

Archival educators may order four or more copies at the discounted rate of US\$6.00 per copy (plus US\$ 1.00 per copy s/h).

We also encourage educators to re-

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Sponsor the exam in your home town

The Academy of Certified Archivists announces its new "You Pick Your Site" program. It allows candidates to petition the Academy to hold the certification examination in any city of their choice. This location would be in addition to the four regular sites.

According to Academy President Charles Schultz, "sitting for the archival certification examination demonstrates a commitment to the profession. With our new

(Continued on page 8)



Please welcome the class of 1997

Thirty-eight persons qualified to take the 1997 archival certification examination, all but one of whom sat for the test on August 27. Thirty-five persons passed the examination. Seven persons took the examination for certification maintenance and six persons sat as pre-appointment candidates. The Academy therefore wel-

twenty-two new members. The six pre-appointment candidates will become full members after acquiring one-year of full-time professional experience.

Of our new members, eleven qualified to take the examination with a master's degree and two years of quali-

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From the president's desk

Processing the first round of recertification petitions in 1996 gave the Regent for Certification Maintenance and our review teams good experience for improving the 1997 recertification process. Our second round proved we must provide better instructions for maintaining the records our members need for completing the petitions.

Former Regent for Certification Maintenance **Willow Powers**, current Regent **Michael Holland**, and review team member **Cindy Smolovik** (recently named Academy Secretary) have produced suggested guidelines for maintaining your certification. Their work is the main feature of this issue.

Therefore, I strongly recommend you keep this issue for future reference. It may prove a valuable tool when your recertification approaches. We cannot print enough for every member to have additional copies. However, we will send copies of this issue to new members as they become certified and the guidelines are posted on our web site.

First study guide

The long awaited *Handbook for Archival Certification* is now available in printed form and on our website. It is the work of the Regents for Examination Administration and Examination Development and the Examination Development Committee.

Our new volume is a revised and substantially enhanced product. It includes sample exam questions that were actually used in previous tests, extensive analysis and discussion of the questions, suggested readings drawn from the examination sources, the role delineation, and more. In addition to helping candidates prepare for certification, we believe the handbook will be a useful classroom tool.

Academy elections

Our Nominating Committee has produced a slate of outstanding candidates. I hope you will vote when you receive your ballot. A new committee will begin deliberations during our 1998 annual meeting. If you are interested in serving as an officer, regent, or member of a committee, please contact me or **Mary Wolfskill**, who will chair next year's Nominating Committee.

March board meeting

The board is exploring several matters with the Institute for Records Managers to see how we might work together and learn from each other in areas such as exam development and certification maintenance. The ACA and ICRM boards held preliminary talks when we both met in Dallas in March.

CHARLES R. SCHULTZ



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Which is right for you?

Two options for recertification

Academy members must recertify every five years to retain the title of Certified Archivist. You may choose to recertify by examination or petition.

Option A. Recertification by Examination

You may recertify by again sitting for the archival certification examination. This has several advantages:

Minimal fuss. Simply taking the examination is the fastest and easiest way to recertify. Most persons complete the examination in about an hour to an hour and a half. Furthermore, if you normally attend the Society of American Archivists annual meeting, or if the examination is held in your area (such as through our "You Pick

Your Site" program), then you will incur no additional travel expenses.

Minimal paperwork. All Certified Archivists are forever qualified to sit for the examination. You therefore do not need to resubmit the examination application or complete lengthy petition forms. To recertify by examination you need only notify us of your intent to do so.

However, the most important benefit of recertification by examination is:

Self-evaluation. The certification examination is your best available method for comparing your professional knowledge to a consensus view of archival standards. It is also an excellent way to gauge the impact of emerging technologies and research on the archival profession. This makes the archival certification examination the most important self-evaluation tool archivists possess.

Option B. Recertification by Petition

Recertifying by petition uses a point system to reward experience, continuing education, and contributions to the profession. Every archivist engages in some of these activities, depending on their resources, opportunities, and personal interests. For example, you may attend an archival meeting, participate in a workshop, present a paper, serve on a committee, etc.

Such activities are important for maintaining your skills and advancing the profession. Recertification by petition provides the only professional forum for recognizing and rewarding the normal professional activities in which archivists routinely engage. **This makes recertification by petition one of the greatest benefits of being a Certified Archivist.**

Recertifying by petition involves taking approximately two hours to complete a petition form once every five years. On the form, you will briefly describe the activities for which you claim credit. This is on the honor system; unless a question arises you need not submit evidence of your activities. However, the Academy recommends you maintain a file of your activities (in which you save programs of meetings you attended, workshop agenda, etc.) as a personal aide-mémoire to help you complete your petition.

Which recertification option should you choose?

Both options have significant advantages. Therefore, the Academy recommends you choose both.

That is, because the self-evaluation benefits of the examination are so great, we hope all Certified Archivists will choose to recertify by examination once or twice during their careers. Likewise, the opportunity to be recognized and rewarded for your professional activities is unique within the archival profession. We encourage Certified Archivists to take advantage of this important certification benefit at least once during their careers.

One scenario is to begin with recertifying by petition and then alternate between the two. Regardless of which option you choose, however, the Academy will always consider both alternatives equally valid. Your recertification choice should be dictated solely by your preferences, circumstances, and goals.

There is no recertification fee.

You must maintain your annual dues, but, regardless of which recertification option you choose, there is no recertification fee.

The archival certification examination is the most important self-evaluation tool archivists possess.

Guidelines for Recertifying by Petition

*Willow Powers, Michael Holland,
and Cindy Smolovik*

Introduction

Congratulations on being certified by the Academy of Certified Archivists.

To maintain certification the Academy expects members to enhance their professional skills and knowledge and contribute to the larger archival profession. Every archivist engages in some of these activities, depending on your resources, opportunities, and personal interests. For example, you may:

- maintain employment in an archives or a related institution with archival duties,
- engage in continuing education through workshops, seminars, college courses, etc.,
- be a member of archival organizations,
- or lead and participate in archival societies.

Even though every archivist engages in some of these activities, before certification there were few opportunities to be recognized for them. *Recertification by petition provides the only professional forum for recognizing and rewarding the normal professional activities in which archivists routinely engage.*

Background

Certification must be renewed every five years. You may renew either by taking the exam or through the petition review process. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide members who think they will be electing to recertify by petition an easy reference for what is expected. These guidelines will also give you ideas for the types of documentation you should maintain to simplify completing your recertification petition.

Recertification by petition requires a total of 100 points within five categories of activity. You may obtain the points through a variety of activities. Points within all five categories are not necessary. A petitioner with full time or part-time employment, consistent membership in one or more archival organizations, and attendance at a few workshops or meetings can easily obtain the 100 points needed for recertification.

Recertification by petition is an honor-based system. For example, you will be asked to provide information such as titles and dates of meetings and workshops you attended, along with a brief description. However, the Academy does not require you to include receipts, registrations or other documentation as evidence. Your word is sufficient.

Frequently Asked Questions

Section A: Employment (40 possible points)

What is meant by "employment in archives or a related field with archival duties"?

The petition defines qualifying professional employment as a professional archivist or archival educator actively exercising responsibility for or teaching about one or more of the following: the acquisition, preservation management, reference, or control of archival materials.

Qualifying professional employment should require an understanding of basic archival principles and the ability to apply them. Managing the work of archivists or administering an archival repository will be considered qualifying professional experience if performance requires substantial knowledge of archival principles and practices, including identification, preservation, or use of archival documents.

How is part-time employment or employment where archival activity is not the main focus (i.e. records managers, oral historians, special collection librarians with minimal archival collections) rated?

The certification process recognizes colleagues in related fields. However, it assumes archival certification must be justified by archival activity. Positions that include a mixture of archival and other professional duties will be pro-rated.

For example, a position consisting of 50% archival work held for one year would be

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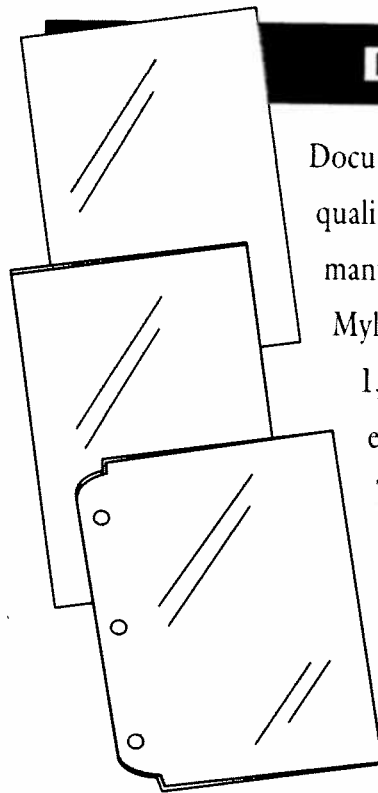
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equivalent to one-half year of professional archival employment; therefore, if this same position were held for the entire five years the total would be 20 points. Each year of full time archival employment is worth eight points.

How are consultants and archivists with independent employment rated?

Projects will be pro-rated on the same basis as other employment. The petition should describe each project—including its archival components—and total time spent.

Why is employment rated so heavily while the other sections have more components to make up the total points?

Employment enhances skills by putting them into practical use and creates opportunities to learn new techniques. Since practicing the archival profession is the main focus of most archivists it stands to reason that employment would be a significant point contributor.

Why are activities such as exhibit mounting, creating finding guides, and in-house training sessions not counted in other sections?

Unless these activities are done for an outside organization, they are considered part of the forty possible points credited in the employment section. If an exhibit, training session, finding guide, or other publication is done outside your job for a totally separate organization, then it can be counted in the appropriate sections. In this situation, the petition should include enough detail to explain why the activity is being considered separately from employment.

Section B: Education (60 possible points)

What type of courses count for recertification?

Formal classroom work relating to any of the domains of archival practice such as selection; arrangement and description; reference services and access; preservation and protection; outreach, advocacy and promotion of documentary collections and archival repositories; managing archival programs; and professional ethical and legal responsibilities.

What graduate degree programs are acceptable for recertification?

Any graduate degree conferred by an accredited institution of higher learning during the five years earns credit.

What types of workshops, seminars, and institutes count toward certification?

As with formal college course work, any continuing education opportunity dealing primarily with activities in the archival domains is acceptable for recertification.

What does "archival component" or "domain" mean?

Archival component and domain simply mean one or more of the basic archival activities: selection; arrangement and description; reference services and access; preservation and protection; outreach, advocacy and promotion of documentary collections and archival repositories; managing archival programs; and professional ethical and legal responsibilities.

Are sessions attended at annual meetings accepted as workshops, seminars, or institutes?

Each session is *not* counted individually, but attendance at annual meetings and conferences is credited in Section B-4 of the petition form. If a specific workshop, seminar or institute is given before, after or during an annual professional meeting or conference, it is separately credited in Section B-3.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide members an easy reference for what is expected when they recertify by petition.

The petition is divided into five sections. There are easily more points available than required to recertify.

SECTION	POINTS
Employment	40
Education	60
Professional Participation and Outreach	45
Professional Service	30
Writing, Publishing, Editing	30
<i>Total points available</i>	205
TOTAL POINTS REQUIRED	100

Are sessions attended at a related organization meeting accepted for credit?

Yes, but only if the topic is related to an archival domain. For example, if the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA) sponsors a workshop on microfilming, digital imaging, preservation or similar topics for historical or permanent records then it would count toward certification. If the title of the meeting or workshop does not make the archival domain obvious, include a brief description so that reviewers can evaluate the validity of the offering for archival credit.

Does a session attended as a presenter or facilitator count in this section?

No. This session should only be counted once under Section C: Professional Participation and Outreach.

Section C: Participation (45 possible points)

How is "participation" different from "education" or "professional service"?

This section rewards members who present archival programs, workshops and seminars. Most archival educational opportunities focus on introductory or moderate skills. This section offers an opportunity for those at advanced levels to accrue points.

Can points counted in this section be counted in "Section B: Education"?

No, this section is designed to give points for enhancing the skills of others by sharing skills and knowledge. The education section is intended to reward points for enhancing ones own skills.

Section D: Professional Service (30 possible points)

What does "professional service" mean?

Professional service means giving something back to the archival profession by supporting the organizations that sponsor or provide continuing education, networking, and information.

Which organizations are accepted?

Certified Archivists should be members of at least one regional or national archival organization. Membership in related organization is counted but should be in addition to professional

archival societies. A suggested list includes but is not limited to national organizations such as:

- Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA)
- Australian Society of Archivists (ASA)
- National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA)
- Society of American Archivists (SAA)
- and other international counterparts to ACA, ASA, SAA, etc.

Regional organizations such as:

- Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives (ANLA)
- Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists (CIMA),
- Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC),
- Midwestern Archivists Conference (MAC),
- Northwest Archivists (NWA),
- Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists (SRMA),
- Society of Southwest Archivists (SSA), etc.

Related organizations:

- Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA)
- Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM), etc.

Section E: Writing, Publishing, Editing (30 possible points)

What is peer review?

Peer review is a process used by most scholarly publishing houses and professional journals to assess the worthiness of a manuscript for publication. It consists of others within the same profession reading the manuscript critically to provide the publisher with an informed opinion as to the value of the work. If an author is in doubt as to whether a publication is peer reviewed, call the publisher or the journal editorial offices.

What types of publications are accepted for credit?

(Continued on page 8)

Recertification by petition provides the only professional forum for recognizing and rewarding the normal professional activities in which archivists routinely engage.

(Continued from page 7)

Those related to archival theory and/or practice. Also acceptable are publications in a related area such as history or biography where reference to archives or archival documents is primary.

Why aren't finding guides considered publications?

Finding guides, in-house manuals, and exhibit publications are considered part of employment and are counted in the 40 points given in Section A.

General questions about recertification

Why is recertification necessary?

The requirements to maintain certification allows for continued growth in knowledge and skills which enhance both the individual and the profession.

Why is the petition a two-part process consisting of a form plus additional freeform information? This seems to repeat the same information.

A strict form limits the amount of space for descriptive information. Since ACA is not requiring documentation, such as job descriptions, receipts and registration forms, more space is needed for descriptive information than the certification maintenance form allows.

The form neatly outlines the types of activities and the amount of credit claimed. The freeform information allows the petitioner to give as much detail as necessary. The freeform format also allows petitioners to prepare documentation for the recertification petition on their personal computers, greatly easing the process for many.

Why can't petitioners just send in a current resume or vitae?

Reviewing hundreds of recertification petitions is a very time consuming and exacting process. The petition form greatly eases the burden and increases the speed and uniformity of the evaluation process. Using a form rather than a resume or vita has advantages for both the petition reviewers and the petitioners.

Suggestion for making the petition process easier:

Keep good records of your activities.

These can include:

- or a file folder into which you drop programs, agendas, and other documents from meetings you attend,
- calendar notations,
- database of activities,
- running lists.

Whichever method you choose, you will need to update your records regularly. Make it a habit beginning today.

"Sitting for the archival certification examination demonstrates a commitment to the profession."

You Pick Your Site

(Continued from page 1)

'You Pick Your Site' program, we hope to show our appreciation of that commitment by reducing associated test expenses as much as possible."

To allow the greatest participation, the Academy's new program has only two requirements:

- Six candidates should petition the Academy to hold its examination at the same site; and
- All participating persons should mail their applications to the Academy by May 1. That is one month earlier than the deadline for registering to take the examination at one of the regular sites.

Susan Box, the Academy's Vice-President and Membership Ombudsman, noted this new program will bring the examination closer to archival students, regional organizations, and international archivists.

"For example, this will allow student chapters and regional associations to sponsor an examination in their area," Box pointed out. "It will also save non-US archivists thousands of dollars in travel costs by allowing them to hold the examination in their region."

The 1998 archival certification examination will be held September 2 in Orlando, Florida; Washington, DC; St. Louis, Missouri; and Austin, Texas. The Academy should receive petitions for the "You Pick Your Site" program by May 1, 1998. The deadline to request applications for the examination at regular sites is May 15, 1998.

For more information, contact the Academy of Certified Archivists, 48 Howard ST, Albany NY 12207, ph: 518-463-8644, fx: 518-463-8656.

Creating ACA study guide was intensive process

(Continued from page 1)

quest a complimentary review copy. Please request review and educational copies on your professional letterhead.

The origin of the *Handbook for Archival Certification* stems from candidates for the examination requesting a study bibliography. In April 1996 the ACA Board directed the Committee for Examination Development to create an archives reading list. At its meeting in August 1996, the board expanded the committee's assignment to include new

sample questions with commentaries and advice for taking a multiple choice exam.

Through the fall, committee members evaluated and updated the ACA question bank and created new questions. They also created a reading list from the sources from which those questions were taken.

At the same time Regent for

Examination Development, **Fred Stielow**, forwarded suggested revisions for the old ACA candidate handbook to the Committee. Examination Development Committee member **Anne Diffendal** prepared a revised edition of the handbook to accompany the study guide.

On a snowy February weekend in Chicago, the Examination Development Committee compiled a bibliography, selected sample study questions representing various domains of knowledge identified in the *Role Delineation Document* and the types of questions on the exam, and wrote commentaries for the sample questions.

By the end of that weekend, the Academy had the makings of a first draft. Regent for Examination Development **Jane Kenamore** edited it for review at the April 1997 board meeting.

With board approval, the committee distributed the draft to graduate archival educators for review. Many of their suggestions were incorporated into the text that went back to the committee in August.

Additional changes were incorporated and a final version was sent to Regent for Outreach **Leon Miller**. Lee designed the handbook and updated the publication to include new board initiatives.

The committee distributed the draft to graduate archival educators for review. Many of their suggestions were incorporated into the final text.

The Academy thanks the many individuals who contributed to the Handbook for Archival Certification.

Leadership in creating the *Handbook for Archival Certification* was provided by Regent for Examination Development **Jane A. Kenamore**, MA, CA, and Regent for Examination Administration **Fred Stielow**, MLS, Ph.D., CA.

Other contributors included:

- **Brady M. Banta**, MA, MLIS, Ph.D., CA
- **Anne P. Diffendal**, MA, Ph.D., CA
- **Connell B. Gallagher**, MA, MS, CA
- **Gregory S. Hunter**, MA, MLIS, Ph.D., CRM, CA
- **Leon C. Miller**, MA, CA
- **Mary Elizabeth Ruwell**, MA, Ph.D., CA
- **Charles R. Schultz**, MA, Ph.D., CA
- **Rosalye Settles**, MA, MLS, CA

Upcoming examination sites

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1998 | Orlando, Florida; St. Louis, Missouri; Austin, Texas; and Washington DC |
| 1999 | Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Seattle, Washington; Atlanta, Georgia; and Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota |
| 2000 | Denver, Colorado; Los Angeles, California; Detroit, Michigan; and Boston, Massachusetts |

1998 Leadership List

President (1997-1998)

CHARLES R. SCHULTZ, CA
Texas A&M University
Home Address: 1200 Goode Street
College Station, TX 77840
Phone: (409) 862-1555, c-schultz@tamu.edu

Vice President/President-Elect (1997-1998)

SUSAN C. BOX, CA
American International Group, Inc.
72 Wall St., 10th Floor
New York, NY 10005
Phone: (212)770-6039; Fax: (212)797-5460
susan.box@aig.com

Secretary (1997-1999)

CINDY SMOLOVIK, CA
City of Dallas
Home Address: 5508 Rolling Green Road
Arlington, TX 76017
Phone: (510) 643-8153
Fax: (214) 670-5029
csmolov@bigtex.ci.dallas.tx.us; csmo@flash.net

Treasurer (1997-1999)

JAMES B. BYERS, CA
Archives of American Art
Smithsonian Institution
Home Address: 7813 Evening Lane
Alexandria, VA 22306
Work Phone: (202) 357-2781
Home Phone: (703) 768-9361
Fax: (202) 786-2608, aaaem002@sivm.si.edu

Regent for Examination Development (1996-1998)

JANE A. KENAMORE, CA
Kenamore & Klinkow
120 Dupee Place
Wilmette IL 60091
Phone: (847) 251-7603
jkenamore@ameritech.net

Regent for Outreach (1996-1998)

LEON C. MILLER, CA
Howard-Tilton Memorial Library
Tulane University
New Orleans, LA 70118-5682
Work Phone: (504) 865-5685
Home Phone: (504) 861-2350
Fax: (504) 865-6773
lmiller@mailhost.tcs.tulane.edu

Regent for Nominations (1997-1998)

MARY ELIZABETH RUWELL, CA
Consultant
Home Address: 1262 Hofstead Terrace
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
Work Phone: (719) 685-4400, x-16
Home Phone: (719) 598-7820
Fax: (719) 593-8989
102504.2742@compuserve.com

Regent for Certification Maintenance (1997-1999)

MICHAEL HOLLAND, CA
University of Missouri-Columbia
706 Lewis Hall
Columbia, MO 65211
Phone: (573) 882-4602
Fax: (573) 884-0027
mulmholl@showme.missouri.edu

Regent for Examination

Administration (1997-1999)
BECKY HAGLUND TOUSEY, CA
Kraft Foods, Inc., 6350 Kirk Street
Morton Grove, IL 60053
Phone: (847) 646-2981
Fax: (847) 646-7699
btousey@kraft.com

Chair of Nominating Committee (1997-1998)

KRISTINE A. HAGLUND, CA
Denver Museum of Natural History
Library/Archives
2001 Colorado Boulevard
Denver, CO 80205-5798
Phone: (303) 370-8353
Fax: (303) 331-6492, haglund@dmnh.org

Chair of Finance Committee (1997-2000)

CARLA M. SUMMERS, CA
University of Florida
310 Smathers Library
PO Box 117007
Gainesville, FL 32611
Phone: (352) 392-6547, Fax: (352) 846-2746
carlas@nervm.nerdc.ufl.edu

Psychometrician

MICHAEL J. KALSHER, PH.D.
Capitol Hill Management Services, Inc.
48 Howard Street
Albany, NY 12207
Phone: (518) 463-8644
Fax: (518) 463-8656

Secretariat

STEVE GRANDIN
Capitol Hill
Management
Services, Inc.
48 Howard Street
Albany, NY 12207
Ph: (518) 463-8644
Fax: (518) 463-8656

Contact our
secretariat for copies
of our brochures,
application forms, to
purchase the study
guide, or for other
information about
the Academy of
Certified Archivists.

Class of 1997

(Continued from page 1)

rying experience; two had a master's degree and one year of qualifying experience; eight had a bachelor's degree and three years of qualifying experience, and three were previously eligible. Twenty-six candidates took the examination in Chicago, five in Phoenix, four in Boston, and two in Charlotte. Successful candidates were:

SHEREE BONAPARTE, CA
Mohawk Council of Akwesasne
Archival Services
Box 489
Hogansburg NY 13683
613/575-1500

REBECCA CARLSON, CA
Missouri Secretary of State -
Local Records Division
5329 NW Sharp Road
King City MO 64463
816-593-2859

PENNY CLARK, CA
Sam Houston Regional Library &
Research Center, Box 310
Liberty TX 77575
409/336-8821

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11 Seven Pines Avenue
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TIMOTHY GREGORY, CA
PO Box 186
Altadena CA 91003-0186
626/403-0437

TIMOTHY HAWKINS, CA
Consultant
2337 East 12th Avenue
Denver CO 80206
303/322-8957

KENTON JAEHNIG, CA
4530 Pinewood Lane
Allison Park PA 15101
412/487-1173

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Des Moines IA 50310
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LAURA R. JOLLEY, CA
Missouri State Archives
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573/526-3965

ROSALITA LEONARD, CA
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Washington State University
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Pullman WA 99165
509/335-6693

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Missouri Secretary of State - Local
Records Program
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LISA PLATO, CA
Information Consultants
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617/498-0703

GWEN THOMAS MAYS
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CANDACE MCKINNISS
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