

# WHO IS AN ARCHIVIST?

An archivist is an individual who typically cares for original material including letters, posters, zines, photographs, government records, oral history, digital files and more!

Anyone can be an archivist! Do you care for your family's records and share oral traditions? Do you collect material concerning your community? These are all the actions of an archivist.

# WHAT IS AN ARCHIVE?

An archive is a collection of materials created by the activities of an individual, family or organization. It is essentially a central place of memory, where others can learn about a particular individual or group.

## ARCHIVES: AN ART AND A SCIENCE

While professional archivists may enter the field in various ways, what they all have in common is a shared set of skills. Archivists develop these skills through various degrees, certifications and training, all in the pursuit of learning and adapting to ever-changing best practices.

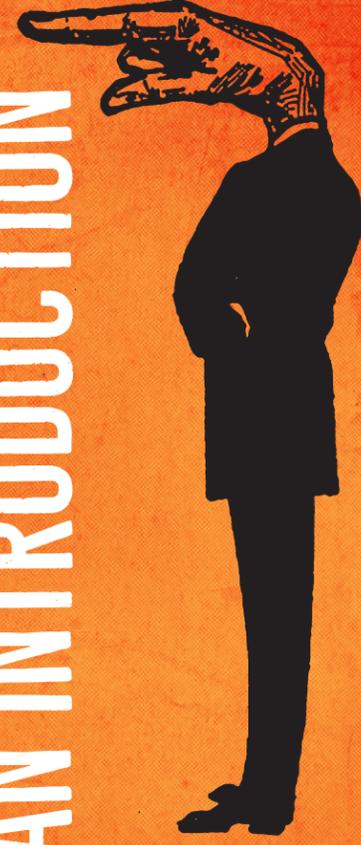
### EDUCATION:

- ↕ Master's degrees in Library and Information Science, History or English
- ↕ Certificates like Digital Archives Specialist Certificate and Arrangement and Description Certificate

### ORGANIZATIONS FOR ARCHIVISTS:

- ↕ Society of American Archivists (SAA)
- ↕ Council of State Archivists (COSA)
- ↕ National Association of Government Archives and Record Administrators (NAGRA)

# ARCHIVES 101: AN INTRODUCTION



## WHERE CAN YOU FIND ARCHIVES?

Archives are everywhere. They can be housed in a public place like a library, historical society, church, community center or university, or in a private space such as an attic, basement or barn. An archive is anywhere material is stored or memory is held.

## WHY ARE ARCHIVES IMPORTANT?

Archives preserve the physical and digital material that helps us connect the past to the present. Without active care of archives, we run the risk of losing these connections.



# WHAT DOES AN ARCHIVIST DO?

## PROCESSING

- ↕ These are the actions taken by archivists to identify, label and arrange material so that others can easily locate the material for access.
- ↕ Putting a group of letters in chronological order
- ↕ Giving appropriate file names to a digital photograph collection
- ↕ Labeling folders so the contents are clear

## PRESERVATION

- ↕ During processing, archivists take actions to prevent deterioration or loss.
- ↕ This can mean:
  - ↕ Placing paper items in acid-free folders and boxes
  - ↕ Removing rubber bands, staples and paperclips
  - ↕ Creating backup copies of digital files
  - ↕ Reformating audio-visual items to current formats



## DESCRIPTION

- ↕ Archivists also describe the material so others know what is available and how they can access it.
- ↕ Bibliographic Records – a basic record that appears in a library catalog
- ↕ Finding Aids – usually a more detailed description that provides more context and structure
- ↕ LibGuides – a platform that allows archives to share content and resources concerning a specific subject



## CHECK IT OUT!

### ARCHIVAL RESOURCES OF THE VIRGINIAS

This database of finding aids provides information about the vast array of manuscripts and archival materials housed in Virginia and West Virginia. Or visit an archive near you!

### PLACES TO LOOK:

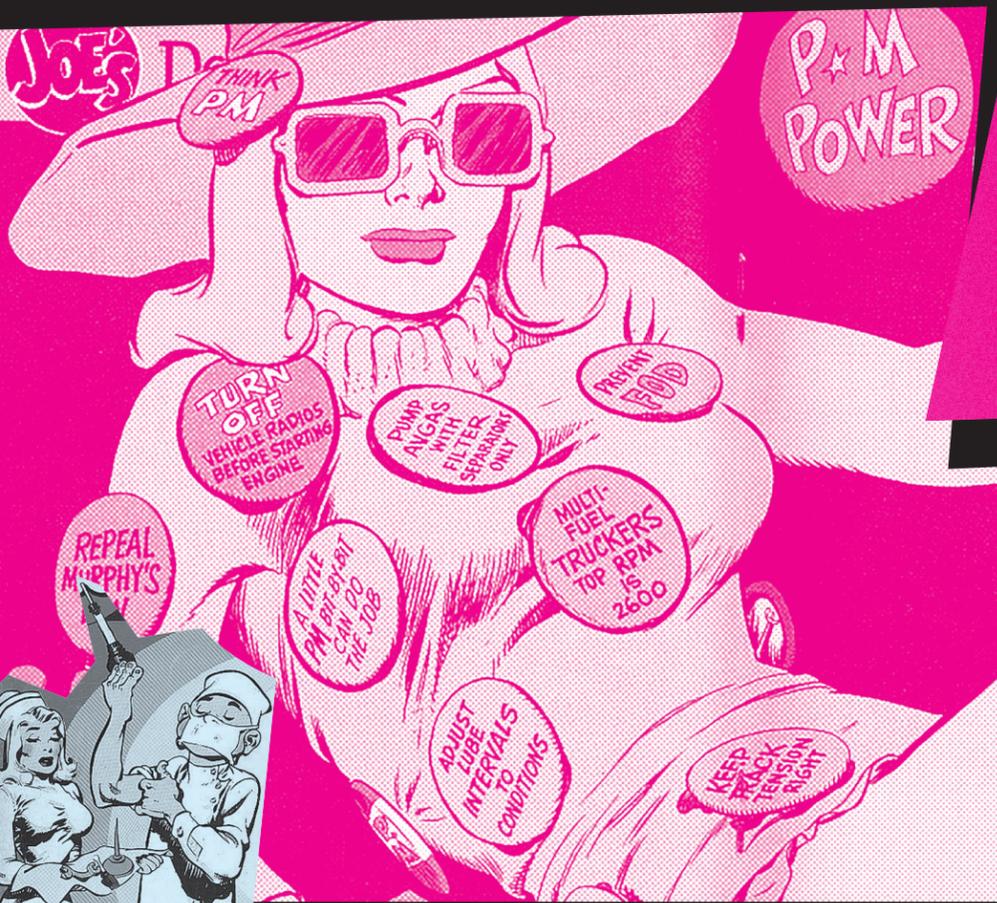
- ↕ Local College & University Libraries
- ↕ Public Library Systems
- ↕ Court Houses & Circuit Courts
- ↕ Historical Societies
- ↕ Community Centers
- ↕ Art Museums
- ↕ House Museums
- ↕ History Museums
- ↕ Cultural Institutions





# ARCHIVES ARE

# COMMUNITY MADE



[WWW.LVA.VIRGINIA.GOV/PUBLIC/ARCHIVEMONTH](http://WWW.LVA.VIRGINIA.GOV/PUBLIC/ARCHIVEMONTH)

LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

MARAC  
Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference