



ACCESSIONING RECORDS TO THE ALA ARCHIVES

American Library Association Archives
at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



WHAT IS THE ALA ARCHIVES?

The ALA Archives is a program of the University of Illinois Archives and is the official repository of the American Library Association.

The Archives collects, preserves, and provides access to inactive records of enduring value from ALA units (offices, divisions, committees, round tables, etc.), members' papers as they relate to ALA activities and librarianship, and manuscripts and records on the history of librarianship.

Since 1973, the ALA Archives has been located at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, creating a partnership between the ALA and the University for 50 years.



WHY DESPOSIT?

Make Sure Your Unit is Represented in the Archives!

- There is great interest in the ALA Archives. While ALA members and units represent a significant portion of researchers at the Archives, scholars, students, and the public routinely access the Archives.
 - *Researchers from as far away as Sweden, Australia and Japan have made the trip to Urbana to visit the Archives in person.*
 - *Researchers from across the US and round the world email the Archives on a regular basis requesting access to records and information.*
- When units don't deposit in the Archives, their stories are not told and are not accessible to researchers.



These could be your records in our processing room! Start the process today!

ARCHIVES SERVICES

The ALA Archives provides a variety of records services

- Management of Physical Collections
- Management of Digital Records
- Digital Collections and Projects
 - *Digitization projects for greater accessibility*
 - <https://www.library.illinois.edu/ala/digital-collections/>
 - <https://alair.ala.org/>
- Web Archives Project through Archive-It
 - <https://archive-it.org/collections/6087>
- Reference Work with ALA Units, Students, Faculty, and the Public
 - *Free Research Time and Copies for ALA Units!*

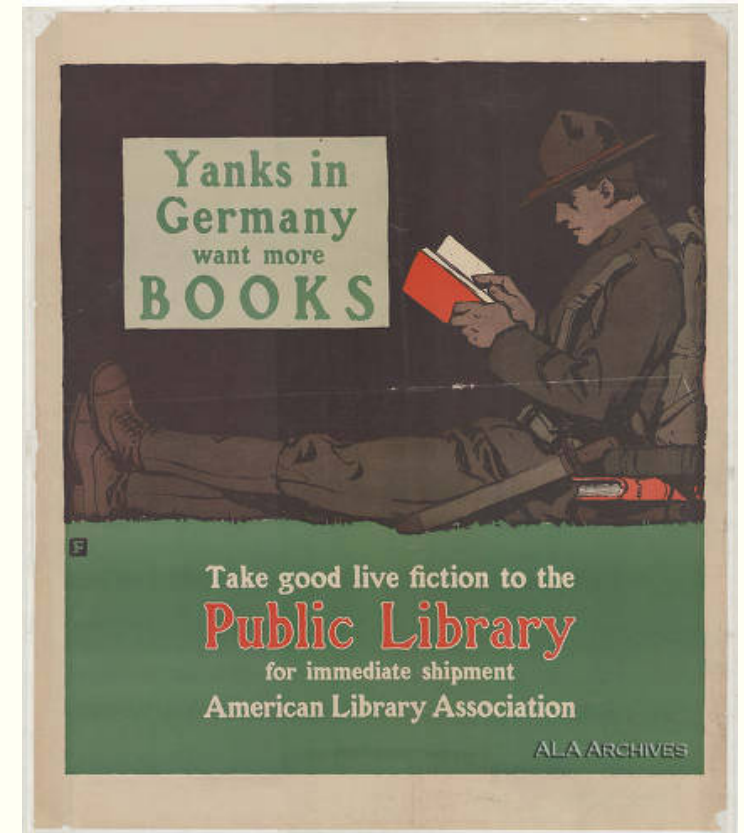


Have questions? We're happy to answer them!

WHAT TO SEND?

The ALA Archives collects records of enduring administrative, legal, and research value, such as:

- **Official records:** constitutions, by-laws, minutes, transcripts, rosters, etc.
- **Office files:** correspondence, memoranda, and subject/project files concerning office activities
- **Historical files** documenting policies, decisions, committee reports, questionnaires
- **Publications:** one record copy of all programs, journals, monographs, newsletters, brochures, posters, and announcements
- **Audio-visuals:** photographs, sound recordings, videos, films, etc.
- **Personal papers** of members which relate directly to association work; for personal papers not directly related to ALA work, please consult the Archives prior to transfer
- <https://www.library.illinois.edu/ala/donate-materials/>



WHAT NOT TO SEND?

Not all Records are Considered “Archival”

- Records of specific financial and membership transactions
- Letters of transmittal where the date and routing information is on the document transmitted
- Requests for publications or information after the requests have been filled
- Stock Materials - blank forms and unused printed or duplicated materials
- Drafts - Papers, reports, work papers and drafts of published materials
- Replies to questionnaires if the results are recorded and preserved in the archives or a published report
- Technical Manuals/Files – Any manuals or files of a technical nature for office computers, machinery, software, etc.
- Artifacts - Because of the limited ability to care for artifacts, *please consult the Archives prior to transfer*. This includes tote bags, shirts, and other non-paper based promotional items.
- <https://www.library.illinois.edu/ala/donate-materials/>
- *This does not mean you need to go through each file and weed out these materials!*

ELECTRONIC RECORDS

The ALA Archives does accept, preserve, and provide access to electronic records.

- Electronic records can be transferred on CDs, DVDs, flash drives, email or via a Box or Dropbox account.
- Have legacy hardware (floppy disks, zip disks, etc.)? We can get records off those!

Contact the Archives about more options for transferring your electronic records digitally.

Or deposit into the American Library Association Institutional Repository (ALAIR)



What to Deposit?

Digital Records that are available for open access can be deposited into ALAIR, such as:

- **Official records:** constitutions, by-laws, minutes, transcripts, rosters, reports, agendas
- **Historical files** documenting policies, decisions, committee reports, speeches, events
- **Publications:** programs, articles, newsletters, press releases, journals
- **Audio-visuals:** images, photographs, videos, and sound recordings

What Not to Deposit?

- Records that have sensitive information that should not be open access, records with copyright concerns, correspondence and case files with privacy concerns, and records with complex office or personal file structures.
- *Ask yourself: Would you put this on your unit's website?*

Contact the Archives for more details on uploading into ALAIR



CHOOSING A BOX

Choosing a sturdy box is important - *Paper is surprisingly heavy!*

- Do not send records in a box larger than a banker's box
- No bigger than 16 x 12 x 10 inches
- Use a new box whenever possible
- If using an old box, remove or blackout all prior shipping labels
- Ask yourself: *Would you send your own personal items in this box?*



Only the box top arrived at the Archives ...



PACKING YOUR BOX

Try to maintain original order

- When transferring files into your shipping box, try to keep the order in which the files were maintained
- Place files vertically so they are standing
- Place cushioning around any excess space – bubble wrap, paper, etc.
 - *Under packing your box can result in it being crushed by heavier boxes*
- Placing files haphazardly often results in the contents slipping out of the files and mixing with other records

DO NOT OVER STUFF YOUR BOX!

- Boxes will *and have* burst open during shipment
 - *A good assessment of weight is: Can you comfortably lift this box?*



Can you comfortably lift over 70 pounds?

THE TRANSMITTAL

Be Sure to Fill Out a Transmittal!

- Transmittal form can be found here:
 - <https://www.library.illinois.edu/ala/wp-content/uploads/sites/74/2021/01/ALA-Archives-transmittal-form.pdf>
 - Example transmittal: <https://www.library.illinois.edu/ala/wp-content/uploads/sites/74/2021/01/ALA-Archives-transmittal-form-Example.pdf>
- Be as descriptive as possible when filling out the form!
 - *What topics/projects are covered by these files? What is the date range? Who created these files?*
 - *You do not need a box and file list, but if you have one on hand the Archives would love to have it.*
- Make note of any special concerns, such as restrictions and fragile materials.
- Put a copy of the transmittal in each box so the Archives staff knows where it came from.
 - *This does not mean you have to create a new transmittal for each box. Create one transmittal for the entire grouping of records and make as many copies as you have boxes.*
- Keep a copy for your records.

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ARCHIVES

RECORD TRANSMITTAL FORM - **Example**

Date: 2/26/1900

Number of boxes or total file size (MB or GB): 3 boxes

Prepared by: Dr. John Watson

Job Title: Committee Biographer

Contact information: dr.watson@ala.org, 221B Baker Street, leave a note with Mrs. Hudson

Title of Record Series: Case Files

Division, Office, or Major Unit: ALA Library

Section, Committee, or Subunit: Consulting Detectives Committee

Date(s) of Record Series: 1887-1892

Description:

(Title, types of material, nature and dates of the creating unit or individual, subjects or activities covered, etc.)

The case files from the Consulting Detectives Committee from 1887-1892. Many files involve foiling Dr. Moriarty (1890-1892) and preventing scandals in Bohemia (1891). Contains case notes and articles by Dr. John Watson, the Committee Biographer. Also includes the correspondence between clients and Mr. Sherlock Holmes, the Committee Chair.

Form of Arrangement:

(chronological, alphabetical by subject, etc.)

Alphabetical by client

Special Comments: Client notes in box 1 may contain sensitive information and there are several fragile tintype photographs in box 3. Please send a telegram once boxes are received.

Physical Materials should be sent to:

ALA Archives
University of Illinois Archives Research Center
Room 105, Horticulture Field Lab
1707 S. Orchard
Urbana, IL 61801

Digital Materials should be emailed to:

ala-archives@library.illinois.edu along with a digital copy of this form

An example on how to fill out a transmittal. Remember, we don't know anything about your files, so the more information, the better!

You can also view the example form here on our Donate Materials page.

PREPARING FOR SHIPMENT

Getting Ready to Send Your Box to the Archives!

- Place a copy of the transmittal inside the box where it can be easily found
- Securely seal the box up with packing tape
 - Don't Forget About the Bottom of the Box and the Seams! - If there are flaps or folds on the bottom or along the box, be sure to seal them up!

Send records to:

American Library Association Archives
University of Illinois
1707 S. Orchard Street
Urbana, IL 61801



Sending Your Records

Contact the Archives prior to shipping your boxes

- The Archives has limited space for storing unprocessed accessions, **always** notify the ALA Archives before sending a box over.
- If you are sending anything in a single legal-size envelope or smaller, prior notice is not necessary.

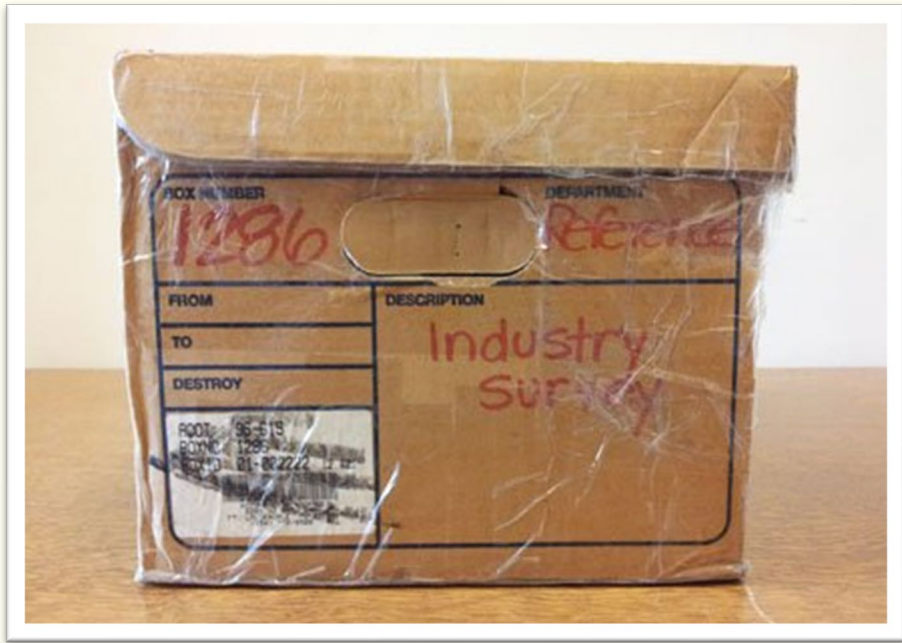


A small office and processing space makes communication about accessions critical.



PROCESSED RECORDS

Once we've received your box, your records are ready for processing! Which means they are placed into new boxes and new folders, a finding aid is created and posted online, and your papers become ready for researchers to access!



Before



After!

Contact Information

All inquiries about accessioning, reference, and general questions can be directed to:

American Library Association Archives

Email: ala-archives@library.illinois.edu

Phone: 217-333-7841

Website: <https://www.library.illinois.edu/ala/>

Address:

ALA Archives

University of Illinois

1707 S. Orchard St.

Urbana, IL 61801



Always working to
make information
accessible to ALA
units and
researchers!
Except over the
weekend, we're
closed then.