

Archivists and America's 250th Commemoration

The semiquincentennial of the United States of America provides a unique opportunity to reflect on the origins of our democratic republic and recognize the evolution of our country from its origins to the present day. Entrusted with the collection and preservation of the historical record, archival institutions seek to support:

- **commemorations** of the creation of the United States,
- **reflections** on how the creation of the United States has responded to societal, environmental, political, and economic change, as well as how the state has become an agent of some of that change, and
- **explorations** of our history as a society of diverse communities who have worked to create a more perfect union.

The records and documents we hold are written by those who were present at the time of change, reflecting their thinking and reasons for continuing to move the experiment of our democracy forward.

Our democratic republic was initiated with the drafting of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and fully formed with the adoption of the Constitution in 1789.

Since that time, our country has evolved in every way imaginable:

- Our population has grown to be the most diverse in the world;
- We have established and eliminated institutions that have changed business, society, and the planet itself;
- We have developed the land that forms our country and sought ways to protect it for future generations;
- We have responded to demands for increased rights and protections with revised statutes and amendments to the Constitution.

Archival repositories in the United States range from large government institutions to small private collections, and from academic archives to repositories of business. These institutions collect, preserve, and make available the essential evidence of the story of the United States and its people. Without these repositories, it would be impossible to interpret the way our country has developed.

The story of the United States continues. Archives are the stewards of that story.

Connect with your archives!

Archivists across the United States are working each day to capture the documents of today that become the records of history for tomorrow. Consider making connections with those working in your area to collaborate on America 250 efforts.

- The [Council of State Archivists \(CoSA\)](https://www.statearchivists.org) is a nonprofit membership organization of the state and territorial government archives in the fifty states, five territories, and the District of Columbia. For more information: <https://www.statearchivists.org>
- The [National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators \(NAGARA\)](https://nagara.org/) is a professional non-profit association whose members include county, municipal, and special district governments, state agencies (state records centers, archives and libraries), the National Archives and Records Administration; federal agencies and employees; public universities, and a number of provincial and institutional programs. For more information: <https://nagara.org/>
- The [Society of American Archivists \(SAA\)](https://www2.archivists.org) represents more than 6,200 professional archivists employed by governments, universities, businesses, libraries, and historical organizations nationally. For more information: <https://www2.archivists.org>
- Explore the [Directory of Archival Organizations in the United States and Canada](https://www2.archivists.org/assoc-orgs/directory) to find a group close to you: <https://www2.archivists.org/assoc-orgs/directory>



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