



# State & Local Records News

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## Send us your 2009 records commission award nominations by November 1!

Late in 2008, the State and Local Government Records Commissions established an annual awards program for state and local agencies, colleges and universities, and historical entities. The awards' goals are "to recognize, encourage, and support . . . special accomplishments in records management or preservation" and to "stimulate an interest in good record-keeping practices throughout state and local government."

Last year's winners were the State Department of Transportation, the Marshall County Preservation Society, and the Mobile County Probate Court. All three agencies won for developing outstanding archival or records management programs.

The annual awards are Governor's Certificates of Appreciation, presented on the governor's behalf by the commissions. Information on award recipients is published in *State and Local Records News*, in press releases distributed by the Alabama Press Association, on the ADAH website, and in publicity resources available to the recipients. Activities that may qualify an agency for an award include:

- Full compliance with the agency's records disposition authority (RDA) in terms of RDA development, implementation, and reporting. Agencies must have in place a

centralized records liaison structure and an archival or records management program. For local agencies, assisting ADAH staff in updating its RDA will help to qualify an agency for an award.

- Increased initiative, innovation or commitment of resources and manpower to records management or preservation programs.
- Compliance with best practices or innovation in the fields of records management or preservation.

Award nominations may be made by any interested party, by the agency itself, by ADAH staff, or by members of the State and Local Government Records Commissions. An award nomination form must be completed in full by the agency or other nominating entity for a nominee to be considered. In order to demonstrate relevant activities, nominators are encouraged to submit supporting documentation (e.g., narratives, news clippings, photographs, publications, or other recognitions received).

Please submit your nominations for awards no later than **November 1, 2009**. Nomination forms and guidelines are found on the ADAH website at: <http://www.archives.alabama.gov/officials/guidelines-nominationform.pdf>.

## Records commissions approve new, revised RDAs

At its meeting on July 22, the **State Records Commission** approved a new RDA for the Alabama Board of Court Reporting and revised RDAs for the Alabama Forestry Commission and the Office of the Secretary of State. It also reviewed annual RDA implementation reports from 31 state agencies and approved the Wiregrass Archives at Troy University, Dothan as a repository for permanent records of the Historic Chattahoochee Commission.

Also meeting on July 22, the Local Government Records Commission approved a revised RDA for county boards of registrars and a one-time records disposition authority for cable television service records created by the City of Daleville. The commission also reviewed the revised leaflet "Records Destruction Procedures for Alabama Local Governments."

The records commissions will meet again on **Wednesday, October 28, 2009**, in the Region's Board Room at ADAH. The State Records Commission will convene at 10:00 a.m., and the Local Government Records Commission at **11:00 a.m.** (*Please note the new time!*)

## Boards of registrars may now resume records disposition

With the approval of their revised RDA on July 22, county boards of registrars are again authorized by the Secretary of State's Office to destroy their outdated records. Secretary Worley suspended records disposition in 2004, pending the implementation of Alabama's new voter registration system.

Now that system is in place, and the county boards' RDA has been rewritten to comply with it. Secretary Chapman has therefore lifted the ban on records disposition. Like other agencies of local government, boards of registrars may dispose of

outdated records by submitting a Local Government Records Destruction Notice. The destruction notice form is available on the ADAH website (see below). For more information on destruction procedures, see the leaflet discussed below.

ADAH appreciates Secretary Chapman's support and the help of Ed Packard, Supervisor of Voter Registration, in updating and reissuing the RDA for county boards of registrars.

## Local records destruction procedures leaflet updated

An expanded version of our procedural leaflet on local records destruction is now available online. Although basic procedures have not changed significantly, agencies may now (as noted in our March issue) submit notices electronically at: <http://www.archives.alabama.gov/officials/dnform.pdf>.

The leaflet also offers suggestions on establishing departmental liaisons, incorporating planned records disposition into an agency's overall records program, and reporting the accidental or unauthorized destruction of records that have not completed their retention periods.

"Records Destruction Procedures for Alabama Local Governments" may be found on the ADAH website at: <http://www.archives.alabama.gov/officials/destructionprocedures09.pdf>.

## Christine Garrett to join the Government Records Division

Archivist Christine Garrett, an ADAH staff member since 2006, has begun working part-time in the Government Records Division's state and local records sections and will join us full-time in October. Hitherto, Christine has worked in the department's publications section, where she has served as assistant editor for *The Alabama Guide*. A

native Floridian, she has an undergraduate degree from Randolph-Macon Woman's College and is finishing a Masters degree in history at Auburn.

Having practically been "one-man bands" in their respective sections for some time (although Frank Brown helps part-time in local records when not occupied with his legislative duties), Richard Wang and Tom Turley are delighted to have some extra help. We look forward to Christine's joining the division and will soon begin introducing her to staff of state and local agencies.



## Rebs on the web! (Yanks, too)

**D**o you have Alabama ancestors who fought in the Civil War? Then you have probably been eagerly awaiting completion of the Alabama Civil War Service Database. After nearly a decade of hard work by ADAH staff and volunteers (headed by Alden Monroe and Dianne Jackson), the database is now finished and online, with over 226,000 entries.

The Civil War database was created from 8 x 5" cards maintained by ADAH from the early 1900s until 1982. As staff came across information on individuals' war service (compiled from

muster rolls, correspondence, veterans' censuses, manuscript collections, newspapers, and pension records), a card file was created. Confederate and Union troops, those who were exempted from service or served in the home guard, and even soldiers from other states who had an Alabama connection: all were included. Yet, the file was not entirely comprehensive, partly because much documentation for the Confederate Army of Tennessee was lost. Not every Alabamian who served in the war was represented.

Data entry, which relied heavily on volunteers, was extremely time-consuming. Because the card file was so large, time constraints did not permit attempting to validate all entries or to research information missing from the cards.

To search for your Civil War ancestor on the database, go to the ADAH website at: <http://www.archives.alabama.gov/civilwar/index.cfm>. When doing a surname search, it is best to search by last name only. The search results will appear in alphabetical order by first name. Remember that any given name can have multiple spellings. Naval ships can be searched under "company name" and naval squadrons under "regiment." When searching for a slave who participated in the war, enter the term "slave" into the surname field.

Additional information will continue to be added to the database as it becomes available. Meanwhile, happy searching! If you have questions, contact archivist Alden Monroe at (334)353-4613 or [Alden.Monroe@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:Alden.Monroe@archives.alabama.gov).



## Linda Overman retiring from ADAH



Linda Overman, ADAH conservation officer since 1989, will retire from state employment on October 30. Besides caring for the department's collections, Linda has served as our registrar since 2004.

Originally from Indiana, Linda held a similar position as conservation officer for the Mississippi Department of Archives and History before coming to ADAH. After retirement, she plans to return to Mississippi and will act as a consultant on records conservation.

Linda's service to ADAH has been by no means all "in-house." She has taught numerous workshops on preservation/conservation issues and has often accompanied state and local records staff to visit agencies on-site. Her expertise in organizing storage space, maintaining proper environmental standards, and caring for historical records and artifacts has been invaluable to public officials, archivists, and genealogists all across the state.

Her colleagues at ADAH will miss Linda as a co-worker and even more so as a friend. We are grateful for her 20 years of service to Alabama and wish her a productive and enjoyable retirement.

## ADAH will present "Basics of Archives" workshop in October

As part of Alabama's "Archives Week" (October 11-17), Government Records Division staff will present a "Basics of Archives" workshop here at ADAH on **Wednesday, October 14**. Scheduled to run from 9:00 until 3:00, it will be open to county and municipal officials; local historians and genealogists, and anyone else interested in starting or developing a local archives program.

The \$35 attendance fee will cover lunch and handouts produced for the workshop. Its curriculum comes from the "Basics of Archives" continuing education program developed by the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences (IMLS). Topics include: establishing a collection policy; housing, processing, and preserving collections; and providing reference and outreach services. ADAH staff will serve as instructors.

For those too far from Montgomery to participate, other institutions around the state will also offer the workshop during Archives Week. They include the Wiregrass Archives at Troy University, Dothan (October 14); the W.S. Hoole Special Collections Department at the University of Alabama Library in Tuscaloosa; and the Museum of Mobile. Check the following web sites for more information and to register on-line: [www.archives.alabama.gov](http://www.archives.alabama.gov) or [www.archivaltraining.org](http://www.archivaltraining.org).

If you would like to talk with Tracey Berzansky or Tom Turley about the workshops, we can be reached at (334)242-4452, or [records@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:records@archives.alabama.gov).