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The Forum

TO THE EDITOR:

One of the questions raised at the SAA convention in Toronto involved the number of SAA members who did not work mainly with archives, manuscripts, or records management. As part of a larger study of the SAA, I tabulated 981 membership questionnaires; these forms had information about the members' primary work responsibility and had been completed between 1971 and October 1973. One could differentiate between members who joined before 1972 and those who joined in 1972–October 1973 by noting the change in the return mailing address.

The questionnaire's results indicate that a sizable number and percentage of both the continuing and new members are engaged in other work than with archives, manuscripts, or records management. Among continuing members, 38.8 percent (291 members) were in this category. The percentage among new members increased to 42.7 percent (96 members). Of the total membership, almost 40 percent (39.5 percent) had their major work responsibility outside of the limits usually used to define archival work.

The survey's finding that about two of every five SAA members do not work mainly with the traditional archival duties lends strong support to the argument that some sort of separate, associate membership should be provided for persons interested in the SAA whose primary professional responsibilities are elsewhere. Many of these members are involved in types of work, such as teaching or being librarians, which also have numerous professional organizations. An associate membership at a reduced rate would appeal to historians, librarians, administrators, and other persons who are closely involved with archives, manuscripts, and records management. The tremendous growth of the regional archival associations also points to the widespread interest in archival techniques. I urge, therefore, that the membership, council, and officers of the SAA consider the institution of an associate membership in order to aid in the spread of sound archival procedures and broaden the ranks of the Society.

MICHAEL F. KOHL
Rhode Island College

TO THE EDITOR:

I have read with interest the valuable and informative article, "The National Personnel Records Center Fire: A Study in Disaster," in the

October 1974 issue of the *American Archivist*. It seems right for me to note, however, that the massive records recovery project could not have been accomplished as rapidly as it was and with as little dislocation, without the assistance of a number of government agencies. These included the Department of the Army, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Veterans Administration, the National Bureau of Standards, and the Library of Congress.

Especially useful to us was the technical advice and extensive knowledge of water-damaged records possessed by Peter Waters, Restoration Officer of the Library of Congress. He and his colleagues were of immeasurable assistance in applying the proper chemicals to retard mold and other bacterial growth. His background in freeze-drying techniques made our decision to use the vacuum-drying process on a large scale much less difficult. I am grateful to the Librarian of Congress, L. Quincy Mumford, for making available to us his experienced and talented staff.

To everyone—both in the federal government and in private industry—who assisted the National Archives and Records Service, I want to express my deep appreciation for their efforts on our behalf.

JAMES B. RHOADS
Archivist of the United States

TO THE EDITOR:

My attention has been called to the notice in reference to the William Livingston Papers, page 642, in the October 1974 issue of *The American Archivist*. The statement that I "initiated" the project is not true, and I will appreciate it if you will correct the statement. The project was first given publicity by the New Jersey Historical Commission in their *Newsletter* of January 1974, which stated that the editor-in-chief is Carl E. Prince, of West Orange, professor of History at New York University. Also that New York University will assume the inkind costs for the maintenance of the project. It was later announced that Dr. Dennis P. Ryan of East Orange, who taught at Seton Hall University, is assistant editor. The project is supported financially by the New Jersey Revolution Bicentennial Administration, the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration and the National Historical Publications Commission.

I have co-operated with Dr. Prince by granting him the use of a few Livingston letters which I have, transcripts of others, and a file of locations of other letters.

GEORGE C. ROCKEFELLER
Madison, New Jersey