

# For the Record

The Records Management Newsletter  
for the State of Maryland

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## RECORDS MANAGEMENT 101 HAS KICKED OFF!

Friday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 marked the first of four trainings conducted by the State Archives and the Records Management Division of DGS. Records Management 101 is a training program designed to provide an in-depth look into the processes of successful records management.

The idea to hold a records management training bore out of the fact that many agencies across State, county, and local levels have similar questions concerning records management such as *how do I complete a retention schedule* or *what is an index* or *why do I have to complete a disposal certificate?*

*“Many agencies . . . have similar questions concerning records management.”*

Over forty-five State, county, and local government employees made their way to the Maryland Department of the Environment in Baltimore for the first session. The trainers reviewed a detailed presentation complete with discussion points and Q&A segments to ensure that trainees walked out of the course feeling comfortable with how they are handling their agency's records.



After an overview of the roles and definitions of records management, the presentation shifted to one of the most questioned and engaging topics: the creation of a records retention schedule. Each section of the schedule was explained step-by-step allowing for a deep understanding of the seemingly complicated process.

One topic that sparked the need for further clarification, and one that frequently comes up while providing guidance to schedule preparers, was how to update a records retention schedule and the differences between superseding a schedule and amending a schedule. Kathryn Baringer of the State Archives explained that if a schedule is out-of-date, it will either need to be superseded or amended.

Superseding is the process of replacing a current schedule with a new one. If an agency seeks to replace a schedule in its entirety, the agency must supersede the current schedule by submitting a new schedule and identifying on the cover sheet (DGS 550-14) the number of the schedule that is being superseded.

Amending is the process of replacing one or more schedule items within a current schedule. If an agency seeks to just update one or more items within a schedule, but not replace the schedule in its entirety, the agency can amend this schedule by submitting a schedule form (DGS 550-15) for each schedule item the agency would like to replace and identifying the item(s) to be amended on the cover sheet.

Are you interested in having a training similar to this one on an annual basis? Couldn't attend one of our 2019 sessions? Have more records management questions? Reach out to us; we are always happy to answer your questions!



## Featured Article: Special Collections

### HIDDEN AGENCY TREASURES

By: Maria Day, Director, Special Collections & Conservation, Maryland State Archives

#### What is so 'special' about Special Collections?

The Maryland State Archives, an agency established by the Maryland General Assembly in 1935, was charged by lawmakers with the mission to collect and preserve the state's official records, documents, and publications. In my role as Director of Special Collections, I often get odd looks in business meetings. Why on earth would an agency dedicated to government records keep "special collections?" What is so 'special' about Special Collections?

The legislators indicated that they wanted the Maryland State Archives to preserve historical and cultural materials that represent Maryland. Maryland has nearly 400 years of history, and as we approach our fourth century, Marylanders need to ensure that significant treasures from that long legacy are preserved and protected for future generations.

#### Magic Lantern Presentation Technique

It is not easy for record-keepers to know what is historically and culturally significant. One Naturalist working at New Germany in Savage River State Forest in 1979 came across several wooden crates in a trash bin behind the state housing he was assigned as the new head of recreational plans and public programs. The cabin's previous occupant had served as Forest Supervisor until his death several years before.

When the Naturalist pulled the crates out of the trash, he saw that they were filled with glass slides once used to project images onto a wall. His predecessor had apparently rescued these slides for his own programs to teach prospective volunteers and rangers about state forests in the '60s and '70s.

The Naturalist likewise kept the slides for use in his future programming about Garrett and Allegany County forestry history. In order to update the technology, he projected the images on the wall using an old magic lantern projector that he found in the basement. [Figure 1]. Then, he photographed the projected images using a single-lens reflex camera and 35mm slide film, preserving their content for his own purposes.



Figure 1: Magic Lantern Projector by Andrei Niemimäki, Flickr Magic Lantern.jpg Created: 12-31-2006 CC BY-SA 2.0

Later in his career, the Naturalist became a Park Ranger and entrusted the lantern slides to the State Park Historian. They both understood that the magic lantern presentation technique went back to nineteenth-century technology and endured until it lost popularity in the mid-20th century. As time went on, more glass lantern slides came to the Historian's attention until he had amassed a collection of about 800 slides. [Figure 2]. (Continued on page 3).



## HIDDEN AGENCY TREASURES (CONTINUED)

Some of the oldest slides are likely the same ones used by Maryland's first State Forester, Fred W. Besley, to teach Civilian Conservation Corps men about preserving the state's natural resources. The Historian and his colleagues recognized the importance of the slides, as State Forests and Parks were due to celebrate their centenary in 2006. They catalogued and transferred the slides to the custody of the Maryland State Archives in the early 2000s. Recently, several Maryland State Archives student interns worked with an archivist and conservator to catalog the entire collection for public access; we hope they will be digitized soon. [Figure 3].

### What Has Special Collection Taught Us?

This story highlights just one example of how seemingly mundane materials from government agencies might someday have unexpected uses or prove to be of historical importance to later generations. Not only have the slides been useful to educators in their work, but they have been important resources for research on State Park history. These images could help naturalists learn more about the environment in Maryland forests and State parks during the early 20th centuries.

There may be similar materials lying in drawers, cabinets, basements, and attics in other government agencies across the State that could help citizens, communities, and other government agencies. Contact the State Archives if you have items that may be of historical or cultural significance at your agency!



Figure 2: Several examples from the glass lantern slides from the State Forests and Parks Collection, MSA SC 1178-8, Maryland State Archives. Image by the author, 04-11-2019.

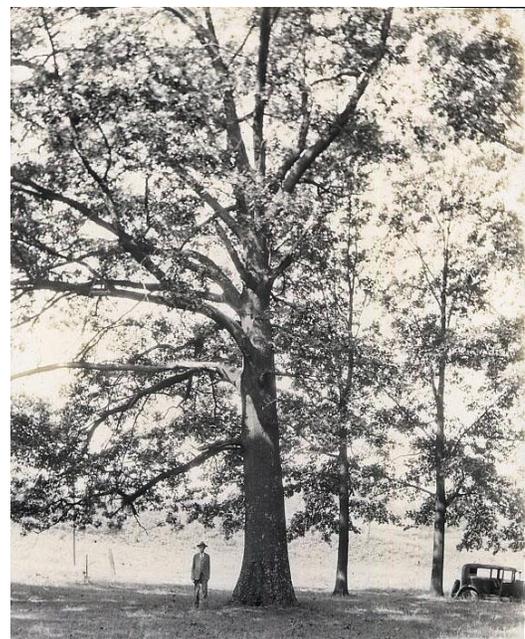


Figure 3: "Scarlet Oak, Forest Hill. 11-9, 78, 88." 2388-1077. b&w, person and car near large tree for scale, circa 1920. State Forests and Parks Collection, MSA SC 1178-8-51. Image: Collection of the Maryland State Archives.

*Questions and comments are welcome! Contact the Records Management Division at 410.799.1930 or the State Archives at 410.260.6400.*