



Welcome to the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA)

Upcoming...

- **Open Houses**
* Note new dates & times!

Thursdays	Fridays
Afternoons 1:30 – 3:30 pm	
January 19	February 3
February 16	March 2
March 16	April 6

Email us at rim@sec.state.vt.us

or

Call Rachel Muse at 828-2397

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Reminders

Transferring boxes to the Records Center

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Project Update

Court Records Project work has begun!

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New from VSARA

More General Record Schedules available!

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Fast Fact

Cybersecurity breaches

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Contact us!

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Meet Your State Archivist: Gregory Sanford

When Gregory Sanford became Editor of State Papers in 1982, Vermont had no formal State Archives. The State Papers Division followed an older model of annotating and publishing 18th Century government records. The State's archival records were stored haphazardly in a basement vault in the Pavilion in Montpelier's flood plain. There was almost no intellectual control over the records. Records management was handled in a similarly *ad hoc* fashion, through the Public Records Division of Buildings and General Services. The two units, despite their similar goals, did not work together. ([continued on p. 2](#))



VSARA Recommends...

Thinking About Scanning?

Increasingly, state government makes records available in electronic format. Therefore it is not surprising that interest in imaging, often referred to as scanning, has grown. There are, however, a few things that agencies and departments should know before jumping into an imaging project. ([continued on p. 3](#))

In the News

E-mails and Record-Keeping

The struggle to manage records in an electronic environment is an ongoing battle for records managers, and questions about what should or shouldn't be done with e-mail are a particularly hot topic. ([continued on p. 7](#))

VSARA in Action

New Developments in Records Management at ACCD

VSARA has been working closely with staff at the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) since 2009 to create and implement a complete records and information management program. This work includes the development of new records retention schedules (which are found on our website at <http://vermont-archives.org/records/schedules/agency/>); replacing outdated and incomplete disposition orders, and thoroughly reviewing the laws and regulations that apply to ACCD's records. ([continued on p. 5](#))

Spotlight on Legal Issues

Litigation Costs and "Discovery" of Electronically Stored Information

Information is exploding in quantity and detail, and more and more of it is being created or stored in electronic form. Often this Electronically Stored Information ("ESI") is found in and across multiple locations and systems. These trends give rise to considerations that were unknown only a few years ago. ([continued on p. 6](#))

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- Open Houses

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Open houses are held at VSARA twice a month.

At these events we provide informal, basic training in records management and using the State Records Center. We give you the opportunity to tour our facilities and meet our staff.

We encourage new records officers and liaisons, or anyone who has never been to VSARA, to attend!

We now offer open houses on the first Friday and third Thursday of every month, at 1:30pm.

If you can't make it to one of our scheduled open houses, and have two or more people in your office who'd like to visit VSARA, let us know and we'll be happy to schedule a visit at another time.

To register for an open house or get more information,

e-mail us at

rim@sec.state.vt.us or

call Rachel Muse at 828-2397.

Gregory Sanford, State Archivist

(continued from front page)

Gregory spent the next thirty years shepherding the preservation and management of state records into the 21st century. By the time the State Archives was created by statute in 2003, Vermont was the last state in the nation with a formal state archives, over a hundred years after the first state archives was created in Alabama. A few years later, the Records Analysis unit was formed, and records management began to be handled systematically at a state-wide level for the first time in Vermont.



(Photo courtesy of Allen Gilbert)

Gregory was first introduced to the world of archives through the George D. Aiken Oral History Project at Special Collections at the University of Vermont and then through the Institute Archives at MIT. Starting modestly, Gregory and the tiny staff of the early incarnations of the Vermont State Archives arranged, described, and publicized the records already in the Archives. Almost from the beginning Gregory sought to tie the definition of archival records as records of continuing value to the idea that there are continuing issues that Vermonters and their government have always grappled with. These include taxation, economic development, the environment, public health, and public safety. Demonstrating that archival records could provide context to current public dialogues and decision making helped create awareness of the value of archival records. Using that greater appreciation the archives staff expanded their efforts to show how effective records and information management was crucial to government accountability and to realizing the value of records as a business asset to government and citizen alike.

Awareness of the value of record and information management encouraged a partnership among Secretary of State Deborah Markowitz, the legislature, and Governor Jim Douglas that led to the creation of VSARA. The combined archival and records management was Gregory's original vision. "Though my first love was, and remains, archival management," Gregory recently said, "I am incredibly excited by the work of the record analysts and the partnerships they are forging. Key to it all is the work of the agency record officers who are quietly achieving a more effective and transparent government. For that I thank them."

(continued on p. 5)



Imaging DOs & DON'Ts

DO	DON'T
Do involve agency business, legal, records, and IT staff in the decision to image records.	Don't make isolated decisions about imaging or begin to image without involving agency business, legal, records, and IT staff.
Do understand the business, legal and recordkeeping requirements before imaging.	Don't make assumptions about business, legal and recordkeeping requirements.
Do identify and describe images (apply "metadata") so that they can be managed as required by State and Federal laws and regulations.	Don't rely on Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for identifying, describing, and subsequently managing digital images.

VSARA Recommends...

Thinking About Scanning? *(continued from front page)*

What Is Imaging?

In general, imaging is the process of converting a paper record to an image or picture. Today, digital images are usually created through a scanning operation, but the State of Vermont has a long history of imaging records that predates scanning technology. State employees began imaging their records and converting them to microfiche and microfilm as early as the 1950s. At the time, microfiche was popular for managing active records because records could be added later. Microfilm, on the other hand, became a popular storage and preservation medium. In the mid-1990s, electronic imaging became equally popular.

The first Vermont state standards on digital imaging, or converting paper or microfilm records to digital images, were issued in 1995. They were based on the Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) TR 25, *The Use of Optical Discs for Public Records*, which is still an active standard. In 2004, *Digital Imaging Guidelines* was issued as a state standard. At present, there is a suite of state standards addressing not only imaging but also file formats, recordkeeping, metadata, and, of course, records management in general.

When considering an imaging project, agencies and departments should ensure that their projects conform to state standards, particularly those concerning the management of records. You can find the state standards, many of which have been co-issued by the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration and the Department of Information and Innovation, online at <http://vermont-archives.org/records/standards/vermont.htm> and http://dii.vermont.gov/Policy_Central.

Why Image?

The decision to image records should be grounded in an overarching need to support and enhance the interoperability, management, accessibility, and preservation of agency or department records. In the past, decisions to image records were often based on the need to save space rather than a clear objective based on business, recordkeeping, and legal requirements. As a result, some agencies and departments spent time and money converting records that in fact no longer needed to be kept for administrative or legal reasons.

As stated in the [State of Vermont Imaging Guideline for All Public Agencies](#), records of all formats, even electronic records, need to be managed until retention requirements have been met. Therefore, if business requirements have not been cross-referenced with recordkeeping requirements, this should be done prior to considering whether or not to implement an imaging project. A comprehensive review of related strategic plans, project charters, record schedules, and similar sources, in addition to state and federal statutes and regulations, is the best way to determine if imaging is necessary.. *(continued on p. 4)*



Fast Fact

- **Cybersecurity Breaches**

A survey conducted by the Ponemon Institute revealed that 90% of U.S. businesses had experienced at least one cybersecurity breach in the past year.

~ *Information Management*,
November/December 2011

VSARA Recommends...

Thinking About Scanning? ([continued from p. 3](#))

Additional Things To Consider

Unlike paper or microfilm, neither of which requires significant technology to use, access, or maintain the records over time, the technological commitment to imaging does not stop after the records have been scanned. There is an ongoing need for hardware, software, and technical support as well as media refreshing, upgrades and replacements. Technological obsolescence will also affect the file formats themselves; therefore, it is necessary to ensure that plans and budgets include strategies and costs associated with migrating digital images from one file format to another.

Contextual information that was used to support access to, and the use of, original source documents needs to be considered as well. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) is the technical electronic translation of the text in a scanned image; however, OCR is a layer separate from the image itself, and its accuracy varies based on the original document (handwritten or laser printed). Information ranging from details about the creating agency, to filing cabinet labels and file folder tabs, to the order and organization of the records themselves, to the tangible differences in paper, writing, and format are significant contextual cues. Thus analogous information about the records, usually translated as recordkeeping metadata, is not only necessary to ensure comparable access to digital images but also to demonstrate the authenticity and reliability of the image.

Resources

As mentioned earlier, Vermont state standards have been issued to help agencies and departments make decisions regarding their records, including the determination of whether or not to use imaging. If records are imaged, additional technological resources will be necessary. Related state standards and IT policies can be found online at <http://vermont-archives.org/records/standards/vermont.htm> and http://dii.vermont.gov/Policy_Central.

For any information technology (IT) project, including imaging, the State's CIO's Office maintains a list of pre-qualified IT vendors. Use of this list should reduce the time required to enter into a contract for certain IT service.

More information about pre-qualified vendors is also available online at http://dii.vermont.gov/Contract_and_Procurement_Mgmt/Prequalified.



This article is a joint effort of the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration and the Department of Information and Innovation, and appears in newsletters of both VSARA and DII.

Reminders

Transferring Boxes to the State Records Center

- Before preparing boxes for transfer, contact the State Records Center staff at 828-3280 or recordscenter@sec.state.vt.us for available box numbers.
- If you are requesting boxes be picked up, and you are not on the state postal route, check the [schedule](#) to determine what month pickup occurs in your area. Submit paperwork for the pickup the first Wednesday of that month, and the pickup will take place the last Wednesday of the month.
- Be sure to tape boxes closed before sending to the records center -- records can be lost or damaged if boxes are overturned during shipping.

See our [procedure](#) for complete instructions on box transfers.

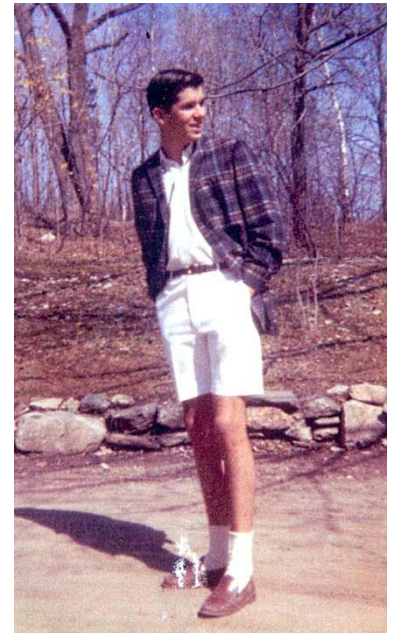
If you have any questions or concerns about preparing your boxes for transfer, contact recordscenter@sec.state.vt.us, or call 828-3280 for assistance.

Gregory Sanford, State Archivist

(continued from p. 2)

Gregory has always been the Vermont State Archives' biggest advocate, and the most prominent voice speaking out for the management and preservation of government records in Vermont. He's a constant presence at the Statehouse during the legislative session, heavily involved with professional organizations on a regional and national level, and a regular voice in local media on matters relating to records and the history of Vermont. Gregory lives in Marshfield with, as he puts it, "the woman who tolerates me," Ondis Eardensohn.

Perhaps the best way to get to know more about Gregory is through his monthly column, [Voice from the Vault](#). An always fascinating mix of history and philosophy, recent issues of Voice include "A Flood of Thoughts," "Records Management and Zombies," and "The Sex Life of Dragonflies and Government Recordkeeping." 📄



(Photo courtesy of Dudley Gregory Sanford Archives Collection)

VSARA in Action

New Developments in Records Management at ACCD

(continued from front page)

The new schedules allowed ACCD to destroy records that had been retained longer than necessary, clearing space in the records storage room. This means that they will no longer need to rely on the State Records Center for storage of many records. The schedules can also be applied to electronic records, allowing greater control over data maintained by the agency in any format.



Maple Sugaring (1930s/40s)
(Series no. A-078. Vermont State Archives and Records Administration, Middlesex, VT)

The schedules also helped identify records of historic value that will be transferred into the Vermont State Archives, where they will be made available to the public for historic research. Correspondence of past secretaries and commissioners, and the minutes and reports of the Vermont Economic Council, Council of Regional Commissions and the Community Development Board, will all be entering the Archives thanks to this work. [\(continued on p. 6\)](#)

New from VSARA

More General Record Schedules Available!

We're pleased to announce the release of two new General Record Schedules (GRS) for agency use. Our most recent schedules cover [Land Use and Related Permits](#) and [Marketing Records](#).

Any agency that deals with permitting for land use or markets products or services should find these schedules helpful in making decisions concerning retention and management of their records.

General Record Schedules set minimum retention requirements for records related to certain activities or functions of state government. Retention periods and directives are determined based upon a review of state and federal legal requirements.

Agencies using GRS should, of course, review any legal requirements or administrative needs that are unique to them, since this may mean that records should be retained longer than the time set in the schedule.


VSARA records analysts are always available and willing to assist in determining if and how GRS can be used by your agency.

Visit our website to [learn more](#) about using this and other available GRS

VSARA in Action

New Developments in Records Management at ACCD

[\(continued from p. 5\)](#)

Records Officer Kathy Thayer says about her work with VSARA, "What's been most helpful is your willingness to work with us one on one to identify our records, right down to pawing through our files and boxes. The statutory reference review is a wonderful piece of documentation that we can use continually. Your patience was very much appreciated as we revised and revised the documents." 



Skiing at Mt. Mansfield (1936)

(Series no. A-078. Vermont State Archives and Records Administration, Middlesex, VT)

Spotlight on Legal Issues

Litigation Costs and "Discovery" of Electronically Stored Information [\(continued from front page\)](#)

Under the United States legal system, it has long been presumed (except for narrow exceptions) that each litigant bears its own attorney's costs. There have also long been rules allowing a court to award the winning party certain "costs" associated with commencing or defending the case, especially as relates to copying and production of documents requested by the other side. In the "old days" these photocopy costs, if a party even bothered to seek them or a court awarded them, were often negligible in comparison to the main stakes in the case.

ESI is changing all of that. In complex current-day litigation, each side may end up deploying tremendous resources to identify, organize, and produce ESI that may be required to be disclosed as part of the case. This can involve substantial, sometimes immense, costs.

[\(continued on p. 7\)](#)



Project Update

• Court Records Project work has begun!

Susan Swasta and Kathryn Puerini have joined the State Archives Unit to begin work on the Caledonia, Lamoille, and Orleans County Court records project.

The project is funded in part by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). The project team began initial planning and inventorying in early January.

The 22-month project will provide for the long-term preservation of and access to 446 cubic feet of recording books, dockets, and case files from the Caledonia, Lamoille, and Orleans County Courts, dating from 1777 to 1945.

Welcome, Susan and Kathryn!

Contact us!

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Spotlight on Legal Issues

Litigation Costs and "Discovery" of Electronically Stored Information *(continued from p. 6)*

While this is still an evolving area, there is a trend in which courts are requiring the losing side to reimburse the winning side for the costs that the winner incurred in production and provision of ESI during the litigation. Unlike the photocopy charges of old, these "costs" in some cases run into huge figures. A party that loses a case is faced with the second loss of reimbursing the other side's costs associated with ESI.

This new risk exposure represents one more imperative reason to manage information in a systematic way and on an ongoing basis before a crisis arises. This comes on top of the fact that management of ESI is increasingly important to success in litigation.

Vermont agencies and departments can and should utilize VSARA and DII as resources in developing and implementing comprehensive, format-neutral records management. Questions regarding litigation and discovery should be directed to agencies' legal counsel or the Vermont Attorney General's Office. 

In the News

E-mails and Record-Keeping *(continued from front page)*

Our neighboring state, Massachusetts, is currently wrestling with a controversy concerning the destruction of Mitt Romney's gubernatorial e-mail upon his leaving office. The following article and opinion piece discuss the questions arising from this destruction:

- [Romney Staff Wiped Out Records in '06](#)
- [Why Did Mitt Romney Erase Official Emails?](#)

Vermont agencies are currently struggling with managing e-mail. If you have questions about how e-mail is handled in your office, raise those with your records officer -- a policy may be in place or in development. And visit our website for Vermont's [Electronic Messages Best Practice for All Public Agencies](#).

On a national level, records management is gaining attention with President Obama's recent memorandum requiring improvements and changes in record-keeping in federal agencies. The memorandum particularly requires that management be applied to digital records and that more federal records be maintained and made accessible electronically. Following is the memorandum in its entirety, as well as an article on this subject:

- [Presidential Memorandum – Managing Government Records](#)
- [Obama Orders Agencies to Keep Better Digital Records](#)



This current issue, along with previous ones, can be found online at <http://vermont-archives.org/publications/records/index.htm>.