

WASHINGTON AREA GENERAL SERVICE ASSEMBLY ARCHIVES COLLECTION POLICY

WAGSA/Area 13 consists of groups in the District of Columbia, Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties in Maryland and Spanish-language groups in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. Thus, Area 13 has a rich history to document and preserve with a specific focus on collection of WAGSA's records. It is the obligation of the Area Assembly to care for these records permanently and to provide proper storage facilities and procedures to ensure their preservation.

The primary responsibility for WAGSA's archives collection is through its Archives Committee set out in the WAGSA Handbook 6th Edition, December 2014, Section 6.2. Archives has both a corresponding Conference and Trustees' committee; AA Service Manual pages *S61* and *S69*. The Archives committee is comprised of a group of trusted servants interested in discovering and preserving our rich history of AA in Area 13.

Pursuant to our primary purpose of maintaining our sobriety and helping other alcoholics achieve recovery, the Archives Committee preserves the legacy of Alcoholics Anonymous with an emphasis on AA in Area 13. The archives collection contains official and unofficial records. These include personal collections, correspondence, events/workshop programs, flyers, photographs, tape recordings and memorabilia considered to have historical import to AA in Area 13 or AA as a whole. The Committee ensures WAGSA's history is preserved in accordance with A.A.'s Anonymity Tradition.

This policy sets forth archival guidelines at the Area level. It includes:

- Collection Scope
- Acceptance of Donated Materials
- Accession and Deaccession

Collection Scope

The WAGSA Archives collects materials in any format that have long-term value documenting the work of Area 13. The Archives Committees' collection priorities include, but are not limited to:

- Trusted Servants lists, newsletters, programs, Officers' and Committee Chairs' reports, surveys, booklets, handbooks, pamphlets, newsletters, service pieces, publications, speeches, service announcements;
- Materials that describe WAGSA, Workshops programming or items that have significance to the organization, articles, speeches, and more.
- Audiovisual collections including: photographs, sound recordings, significant to Area 13; as well as other significant events; speeches and talks by early WAGSA. pioneers, and other individuals;
- Minutes and other documentation of WAGSA Assemblies, Area meetings, committee meetings,
- Workpapers, subject files, correspondence, reports, financial information;
- Personal papers of significant figures, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic, including early A.A. pioneers in Area 13 – these may include correspondence, journals, diaries, scrapbooks, photographs, obituaries, awards and artifacts;
- Oral histories and stories of figures significant to the operations of WAGSA and Area 13
- Area histories, and selected reports and area newsletters.

Acceptance of Donated Materials

The WAGSA Archives is happy to accept donations of archival materials that fit the above collection scope. Anyone wishing to donate items of archival value should contact the Chair of the Archives Committee to discuss the donation and determine the items' suitability for donation to the WAGSA Archives.

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Any collection we accept commits us to the task of organizing and preserving it, which involves hand labor and costs for archival supplies, therefore acceptance and maintenance of materials shall be limited by committee funds appropriated by the Area Assembly through the annual budget approval process. Donations that require expensive conservation, special housing, intensive processing, or other excessive demands on the Archives' resources may not be accepted.

The donor will be asked to sign a Deed of Gift, transferring his or her property over to the WAGSA Archives. We prefer that title to the property be transferred without restriction, but we are willing to work with donors who specify certain restrictions as a condition of the gift. If appropriate the donor may also be asked to sign an Assignment of Copyright form.

The WAGSA Archives does not do monetary appraisals for donors and will not comment on the financial value of any material. If a monetary appraisal is necessary, it is recommended that such appraisals be done by a disinterested third party before title to the material is conveyed to the WAGSA Archives.

The WAGSA Archives does not purchase archival records, books, or artifacts. The WAGSA Archives does not accept items on loan.

Exclusions

To avoid duplication of efforts, the Archives of WAGSA generally does not seek to acquire collections with a focus on local groups, and collected by the Washington Area Intergroup Association (WAIA). WAIA, the local intergroup/central office has a vibrant archives collections of their own, and these kinds of materials may be more significant to their archives.

In cases where the collection would be a better fit in a different archives collection, the WAGSA Archives Committee will work with the donor to place it in the appropriate repository.

The WAGSA Archives also generally does not collect the following types of documents:

- Drafts, raw statistical data, or incomplete documents
- Three-dimensional artifacts such as framed artwork, T-shirts, mugs, jewelry, etc.
- Multiple copies of any one item

Accession and Deaccession

In most cases, a maximum of three copies of any item will be retained.

The Archives may decide to digitize, microfilm, or otherwise reformat donated collections for preservation purposes. In these cases, the original material may be kept by the Archives, sent to off-site storage, or removed from the collection.

Usually, donated archival materials are considered extremely important and are intended to be kept permanently. However, no individual or institution can predict or govern the changing attitudes of future generations, nor guarantee permanency beyond the best available preservation procedures.

The Archives reserves the right to reevaluate historical material and to carefully and judiciously deaccession and dispose of certain items from its collection in a manner consistent with professionally accepted standards. The Archives may decide to deaccession an item if any of the following conditions are present:

1. The item is not relevant to WAGSA or Area 13 or to the Archives' mission and purpose;
2. The item would be more appropriately housed in a different archival repository;
3. The item has deteriorated beyond usefulness;

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4. The item is made of hazardous materials or is actively decomposing in a manner that directly affects the condition of other items and/or the health and safety of committee members and/or other Area 13 members;
5. The Archives is unable to continue to provide care and storage for the object in keeping with professionally accepted standards;
6. The item's care and storage are far more expensive than the value of the object as it relates to the Archives mission and purpose;
7. The item may be replaced with a similar object of greater significance, quality, and better condition;
8. The item is subject to legal and ethical standards requiring its removal.

Complete records will be maintained on all deaccessioned items and their subsequent disposition. A deaccessioned item may be disposed of in one of the following methods (in order of desirability):

1. Transfer to another more appropriate Alcoholics Anonymous archives repository, at the level of the region, intergroup/central office, area, district, or group;
2. Donation to an appropriate non-A.A. archives or scholarly institution;
3. Return to the original donor;
4. Destruction of the item

References:

The AA Service Manual 2013-2014 Edition

G.S.O. Archives Workbook

G.S.O. Archives Collection Policy