

2015 Annual Report - Records, Archives and Information Management Services (RAIMS)

The Records and Archives Center continues to be a popular place for storage of permanent and non-permanent records. During 2015 we received 1200 cubic feet of records from the various departments and were able to destroy 600. Two factors that influenced this increase were the renovation of offices and we received all of the family court records that were in the court house basement because of the breakdown of the elevator. They needed more room for its supplies. Many of the incoming documents are listed as permanent which means they can only be destroyed after being converted to electronic and microfilm formats. The County Clerk and Payroll are already striving to become paperless. Both create electronic records and the RAIMS Microfilm Section produces computer-generated microfilm from them. Although the State permits the creation of permanent electronic records under rigid guidelines, constant changes in software and hardware could end in disaster. Therefore the use of electronic records for accessibility and microfilm for preservation is a perfect blend.

The Microfilm Section of our department, consisting of Kris Martin, Robin Cuppernell imaged and microfilmed 1,357,645 documents. Without this compression of records, the Records and Archives Center would have added 270 additional cubic feet to storage; all of it for permanent retention. Compression of permanent records is absolutely essential in order to retain sufficient storage space for the future needs of the County. Robin completed the backlog of nineteenth century records. This is a preservation task to prevent the use of fragile paper records by researchers. She now has begun a new project of microfilming the wills from the Surrogate Court. The microfilmmers as well as microfilming the county's records have worked on projects from the Historical Society and the Town of Geneva. This has not only strengthened our cooperation with them but generated some revenue.

The various departments asked Donna McCormick, the RAIMS records clerk, to climb the shelves for 2,514 file retrievals which eventually are returned and put back in storage. In addition there were 3,438 inter-filings. These are documents that need to be added to existing file folders, mostly from the County Clerk, the DA and DSS and Family Court. This number has increased nearly 50%. This is due partly because of the family court records that are now stored at the facility. Donna is also in charge of shelving incoming boxes, notifying departments when records are due for destruction, and for pulling document boxes to shred the content.

We sponsored several workshops to improve the skills of records managers from western New York and invited all county staff members to attend. We made visits to different departments in order to review their records to make sure they comply with state mandated retention schedules. To continue with our public service, Brooke Morse, Assistant RMO, answered 186 email reference questions and 54 mail inquiries. We also served 375 in-house researchers. Brooke has continued to update our website with more

searchable record indexes; a newer addition is the State of Connecticut. A Index. This is now our second year using Facebook as way to connect with the public ideas and images of what is happening in the archival world.

In October, to recognize Archives Month, Brooke constructed and displayed the exhibit: "The Century Farm in Ontario County". The exhibit highlighted the County's rich resources of land and families.

In November we were asked to host the Ontario County's Genealogical Society's meeting. We explained what resources and information we have available for researchers and gave the group a tour of our facility.

This year we established an unpaid internship program. We made connections with the area colleges and we were fortunate to have a graduate student from the University at Buffalo work with us this past summer. She was a great asset and she earned 3 credits towards her degree in Library Science. She has continued as a volunteer here once a week. We have 5 volunteers at this time and they have worked 410 hours over the past year on different processing projects.

The RMO continued to add public records and new users to DocuShare. Although some departments are already active participants in adding useful information, more departments need to become involved in the future.

One additional time consuming task is FOIL. It does not only occupy the Records Access Officer 55% of the time, but has become a significant burden to the County Attorney's Office, particularly Kris Thorsness, the DA Michael Tantillo and the Sheriff's records center, especially Colleen Rice. My thanks go out to all of you.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the RAIMS staff for all their work, the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator and staff for their support of the Department of RAIMS.

THE STAFF:

Rosemary Switzer, Records Management Officer and Records Access (FOIL) Officer

Dr. Preston Pierce, County Historian (PT)

Brooke Morse, Assistant Records Management Officer

Donna McCormick, Retrieval Clerk

Robin Cuppernell, Microfilmer

Kristine Martin, Microfilmer

Elizabeth Alcivar, Clerk (PT)