



# State & Local Records News

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## Historical Records Advisory Board holds inaugural meeting

**O**n August 31, representatives from Alabama historical, genealogical, and local officials' organizations convened at ADAH for the first meeting of the revived Alabama Historical Records Advisory Board (HRB). Such boards serve as the "central advisory board of historical records planning" in their states, under the auspices of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). Although any state wishing to apply to NHPRC for historical records grants must have a board in place, Alabama had not had an active board since concluding its Local Government Historical Records Grant Program in 1996.

Agencies represented on the HRB include the Alabama Association of Municipal Clerks and Administrators, the Alabama Circuit Clerks Association, the Alabama Genealogical Society, the Alabama Historical Association, the Alabama League of Municipalities, the Alabama Library Association, the Alabama Press Association, the Association of County Commissions of Alabama, the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, the Black Heritage Council, the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries, the Probate Judges Association, the Society of Alabama Archivists, the Sons of the Confederate Veterans, and the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Members from all but four of these organizations were present at the meeting.

Tracey Berezansky, Assistant Director for Government Records at ADAH, began by giving the HRB's members an overview of their responsibilities and the role of NHPRC in providing grant support for historical records projects. Local records archivist Tom Turley provided a brief history of the ADAH local records program since Alabama's original needs assessment report was conducted in 1985.

Among the board's initial actions will be developing a five-year plan for historical records preservation, creating by-laws, and establishing a procedure for reviewing NHPRC grant applications. Dr. Ed Bridges, who as state archivist also serves as State Historical Records Coordinator and chairman of the HRB, asked members to create three committees to address these issues. In addition, the board agreed to set up staggered terms of one, two, or three years for its members.

Because so many historical records issues in Alabama await its attention, Dr. Bridges suggested that the revived HRB hold quarterly meetings for at least the first year of its existence. The date of the next meeting will be announced on the ADAH website ([www.archives.state.al.us](http://www.archives.state.al.us)). Meanwhile, for more information on HRB activities and plans, contact the ADAH Government Records Division at (334)242-4452, or [records@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:records@archives.alabama.gov).

## State Records Commission approves new, revised RDAs

At its meeting on July 26, 2006, the **State Records Commission** approved new records disposition authorities (RDAs) for the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the Legislative Council/Legislative Reference Service. It also approved RDA revisions for the Alabama College System, the Home Builders Licensure Board, and the Department of Transportation and reviewed annual RDA implementation reports from 28 state agencies.

The **Local Government Records Commission** did not convene for its quarterly meeting, due to lack of a quorum. Items on the agenda were held over for the commission's October meeting.

The commissions' next meetings will be held on **Wednesday, October 25**. The State Records Commission will begin at 10:00 a.m., and the Local Government Records Commission will begin at 1:30 p.m. Both meetings will be held in the Regions Board Room on the third floor of ADAH.

## Attorney General's Office appoints new commission representative

Bill Garrett, head of the civil division of the Attorney General's Office, has been appointed as its new representative on the State and Local Government Records Commissions.

Mr. Garrett replaces Alyce Robertson, who left the Attorney General's Office recently to enter private practice. Ms. Robertson had been a member of the records commissions since 2000. ADAH appreciates her service to the state and wishes her well in her new career.

## New members appointed to Local Government Records Commission

Early in September, Governor Bob Riley's office appointed three new members to the Local Government Records Commission, filling vacancies that had existed for almost two years. Because the commission requires a quorum of its full membership in order to hold meetings, the vacancies had caused several meetings to be canceled when more than two of the remaining members were unable to attend.

The three new members are: David Ed Bishop, Baldwin County Commission chairman; Geniece Johnson, city clerk for the City of Fairhope; and Pam Morse, town clerk for the Town of West Blocton. They will attend the Local Government Records Commission's next meeting on October 25.

## New act prohibits access to Social Security numbers in state records

Under the provisions of Legislative Act 2006-611, it is illegal for any state government entity to allow public access to any record that contains a Social Security number without the expressed permission of the number's owner.

Government Records Division staff would like to remind state agencies that future transfers of their records to ADAH will be closely monitored for compliance with this act. Agency staff who have questions should contact Richard Wang, state records archivist, at (334)353-4605, or [Richard.Wang.archives.alabama.gov](mailto:Richard.Wang.archives.alabama.gov).

## ADAH grounds beautified by historical bronze map

The landscaping at ADAH continues to take shape, especially now that its centerpiece—a large bronze relief map of Alabama—is finally in place.



*A young visitor examines Alabama's historical geography*

This magnificent work, which arrived from New York on July 28, now rests in front of the Archives Building and in view of the Capitol. Commissioned by ADAH and funded by an anonymous donor, the 12' x 18' map was sculpted by Gregg LeFevre and Jennifer Andrews. It shows the state's rivers, interstate highway systems, major cities, and other physical features, including 85 interesting facets of Alabama's history and culture.

Visitors to ADAH can walk on the map and explore its every detail, a unique advantage of this work of "public art." As noted by landscape architect Mary Walton Percy, "it's . . . a wonderful way to welcome visitors to the Archives."

## More counties receive loose records microfilm

Since our last report on the loose records program (February 2006), several more counties have finished

projects or received copies of their microfilm. The total of completed counties stood at 40, after Cleburne County's last rolls were finished early in September.

During the summer, four counties held microfilm presentation ceremonies, at which GRD staff also presented certificates of appreciation to project volunteers. Bibb County's project received 55 rolls of estate files, guardianships, and marriage records (1815-1916). Chilton County filmed 23 rolls of estates, marriages, and Confederate pension records (1868-1940). Crenshaw County did 37 rolls of estates, guardianships, Confederate pensions, and divorces (1866-1950). Finally, Lee County completed 91 rolls of estate files, guardianships, and marriage records (1865-1938). All of this microfilm has been incorporated into the ADAH local records database ([www.archives.state.al.us/localrecords/search.cfm](http://www.archives.state.al.us/localrecords/search.cfm)) and is available for research.

A major milestone in the loose records program was achieved in August, when Jefferson County finished its five-year project in the county probate office. This project, although started by the late Kent Lewis, was coordinated during most of its history by Jeri Corbitt. Volunteers from the Birmingham Genealogical Society prepared estate files and marriages (1818-1950) from both Birmingham and Bessemer, which were then microfilmed by GSU camera operator Eric Olsen. The project produced 519 rolls of film, making it by far the largest one in Alabama. Not resting on their laurels, Jefferson County's volunteers are now at work on a records scanning project in the circuit court.

For more information on the loose records microfilming program, contact local records archivist Tom Turley at (334)353-4607, or [Tom.Turley@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:Tom.Turley@archives.alabama.gov).