

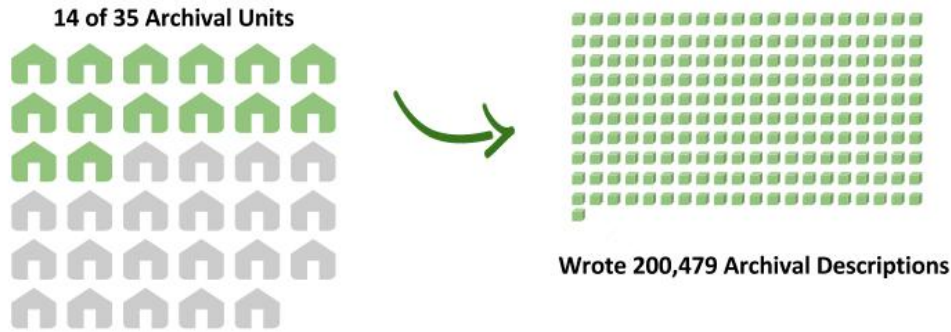
NATIONAL ARCHIVES CATALOG

One month by the numbers

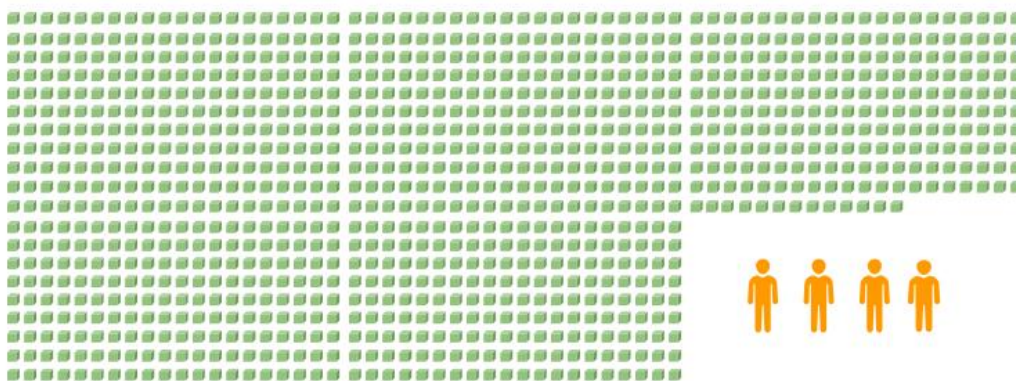
In recent newsletters we've talked about new features, items, and images in the [National Archives Catalog](#). Today we want to peek behind the curtain at the number of offices and people at the National Archives it takes to add descriptions and digitized records to our Catalog.

April was a fairly ordinary month for the number of descriptions at the National Archives, but when you look at the numbers in this context it is quite extraordinary.

April 2016 By the Numbers




200,479 Archival Descriptions Went Through 3 Levels of Review



1,103,537 Digital Objects (jpg, mp3, mp4) Provided by the Archival Units
Were Added to the Descriptions by 4 People

 All 200,479 Archival Descriptions and 1,103,537 Digital Objects
Were Uploaded to catalog.archives.gov by 1 Person

 = 1000

You may have some questions about the graphic above, for example:

What is an archival unit?

Think of an archival unit like an office that specializes in certain kinds of records. We have units based on the kinds of records they hold (e.g. Textual Records or Still Pictures); based on their regional location (e.g. the National Archives at Atlanta, or the National Archives at Fort Worth); and the Presidential Libraries (e.g. the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library or the John F.

Kennedy Library).

What is an archival description?

An archival description describes the records we hold in the National Archives. Series descriptions describe records that were accumulated and used together during a distinct period of time. The records in a series are usually arranged in a particular order. A file unit usually describes the equivalent of a folder. A file unit could have a single record in it or many. An item describes a single record - it could be a letter, a report, a photograph, a film, or even a memorandum. The 200,479 descriptions written in April include series, file units and items.

What are the three levels of review?

A staff member writes a description in their archival unit. Then a description reviewer in that office reviews the description and sends it to the Digital Public Access Branch. In Digital Public Access the description is reviewed and edits are sometimes suggested or made to meet the National Archives' description standards. Then once corrections are made (if needed) it is reviewed once more before it is uploaded to the [Catalog](#).

What does “adding a digital object” mean?

Archival descriptions are written descriptions of records and when possible we also add images, sound or video to the descriptions. In this process we marry a digital file (e.g. jpg, pdf, mp3, mp4) to the written description. Most of the time this can be done in an automatic process after the data is formatted correctly, but sometimes it is a manual process to add the data into the description for every single page.

Do you have a favorite record in our Catalog? Have you discovered something new recently? Let us know by emailing catalog@nara.gov and we may feature it in an upcoming Newsletter.

New and interesting records in the Catalog

Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission: [Staff Documents, 2009-2011](#)

Incoming and outgoing correspondence, administrative files, witness lists, records supporting hearings, chronologies of the financial crisis, risk model data, press releases and other records relating to the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission (FCIC) interaction with the media.

Branch of Alaskan Geology: [Project Chariot Files, 1958-1963](#)

Geologic, geophysical, and geochemical studies and other records created by personnel connected with Project Chariot. Project Chariot was one of several projects planned under the auspices of Operation Plowshare which was developed to explore the use of nuclear explosions for peacetime construction. Project Chariot was a plan to use nuclear blasts to create a harbor at Cape Thompson, Alaska.

Pacific Command, Military Personnel and Services Division: [General Records Relating to Bob Hope Christmas Shows, 1970-1972](#)

Correspondence, memoranda, messages, and an after action report pertaining to the planning and preparation for the Bob Hope Christmas programs in Vietnam. Included is an after action report for Operation Holly; diagrams of stage constructions and seating arrangements; records relating to transportation arrangements; and itineraries for the visits.

Questions or comments? Email us at catalog@nara.gov.



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