

# Collections Appraisal

Lauren Amundson, Lowell Observatory  
Rebekah Tabah Percival, Arizona Historical Society

November 8, 2023  
Arizona Museum Archives Network  
2023-2024 Museum Archives Programs

# Welcome!

## Arizona Museum Archives Network Partners

- Museum Association of Arizona [www.azmuseums.org](http://www.azmuseums.org)
- Arizona Archives Alliance [www.arizonaarchives.org](http://www.arizonaarchives.org)
- Knowledge River Program, University of Arizona School of Information



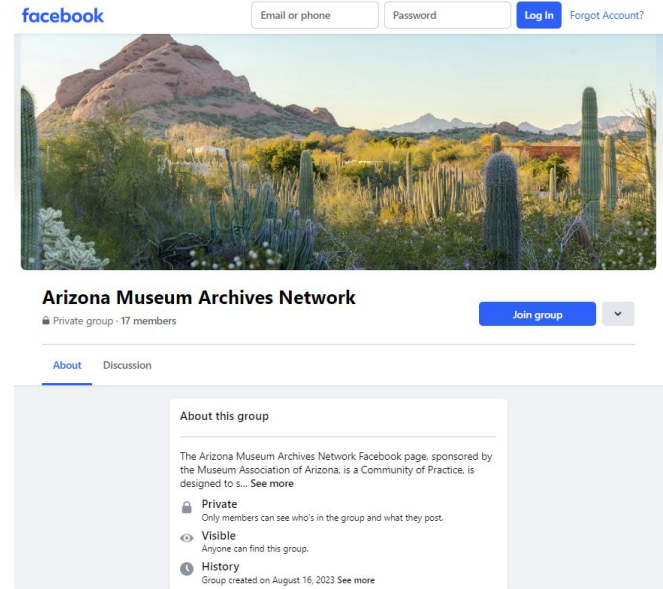
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES  
School of Information




Arizona  
Archives  
Alliance

# Arizona Museum Archives Network Facebook Community

- We're a private group where only members can participate. Each membership application is approved by one of the page administrators, keeping the discussion between museum and archives colleagues.
- Go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/648662167222982> and click the "Join group" link. You will need a Facebook account to participate.



# 2023-2024 Museum Archives Programs

- November 8, 2023 – Collections Appraisal Webinar ★  You are here!
- December 13, 2023 – Collections Appraisal Roundtable Discussion
- January 10, 2024 – Archives Within the Museum Structure Webinar
- February 14, 2024 – Archives Within the Museum Structure Roundtable Discussion

Recordings will be shared and available on MAA's YouTube channel.

More information on upcoming programs available on the MAA website:

<https://azmuseums.wildapricot.org/2023-2024-Museum-Archives-Programs>.

# What does appraisal mean for archives?

## appraisal

*n.*

1. the process of identifying materials offered to an archives that have sufficient value to be accessioned
2. the process of determining the length of time records should be retained, based on legal requirements and on their current and potential usefulness
3. the process of determining the market value of an item; monetary appraisal

## reappraisal

*n.*

1. the process of identifying materials that no longer merit inclusion in an archives and that are candidates for deaccessioning

# Today's Presenters



Rebekah Tabah Percival

Assistant Director

Vice President Library, Archives,  
Collections, Exhibits, & Education



ARIZONA  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

Lauren Amundson

Archivist and Librarian

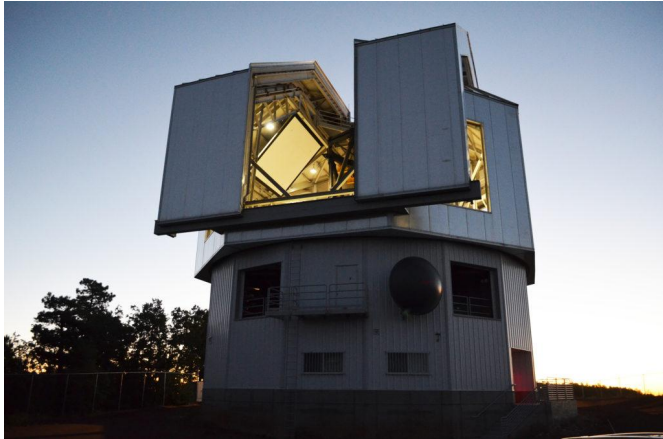


Lowe  
OBSERVATORY



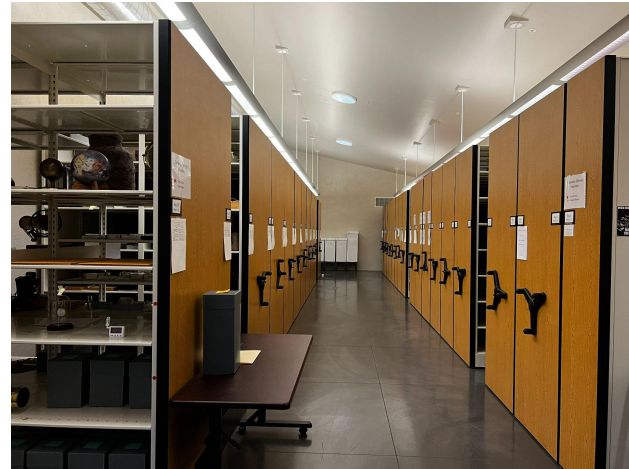
# Lowell Observatory

- Founded in 1894
- Small non-profit organization
- Active research institution



## Lowell Observatory Archives

- Two full-time staff members
- Six volunteers
- Occasional interns



# Arizona Historical Society

**Mission: Connecting people through the power of Arizona's history.**

- Established by an Act of the First Territorial Legislature on November 7, 1864
- Four locations - Tempe, Tucson, Flagstaff, Yuma
- Over 2,000 Manuscript Collections
- Over 1 Million Photographs
- Over 27,000 objects





# Determining Value

## Fair Market Value vs. Intrinsic Value vs. Historical Value

- Can we provide appraisals to people?
- Can we sell objects/archives?

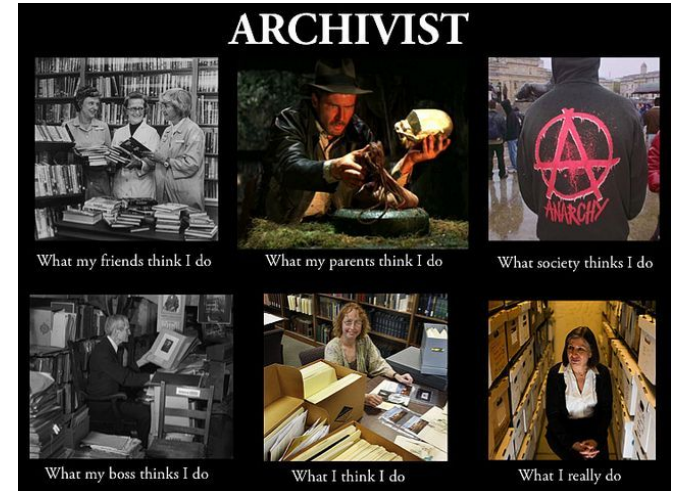
American Society of Appraisers  
P.O. Box 17265  
Washington, DC 20041  
703/478-2228; 800/272-8258  
[www.appraisers.org](http://www.appraisers.org)

International Society of Appraisers  
Riverview Plaza Office Park  
International Society of Appraisers  
1131 SW 7th Street, Suite 105  
Renton, WA 98005  
206/241-0359; Fax: 206/241-0436  
[www.isa-appraisers.org](http://www.isa-appraisers.org)

Appraisers Association of America  
386 Park Avenue South, Suite 2000  
New York, NY 10016  
212/889-5404  
[www.appraisersassoc.org](http://www.appraisersassoc.org)

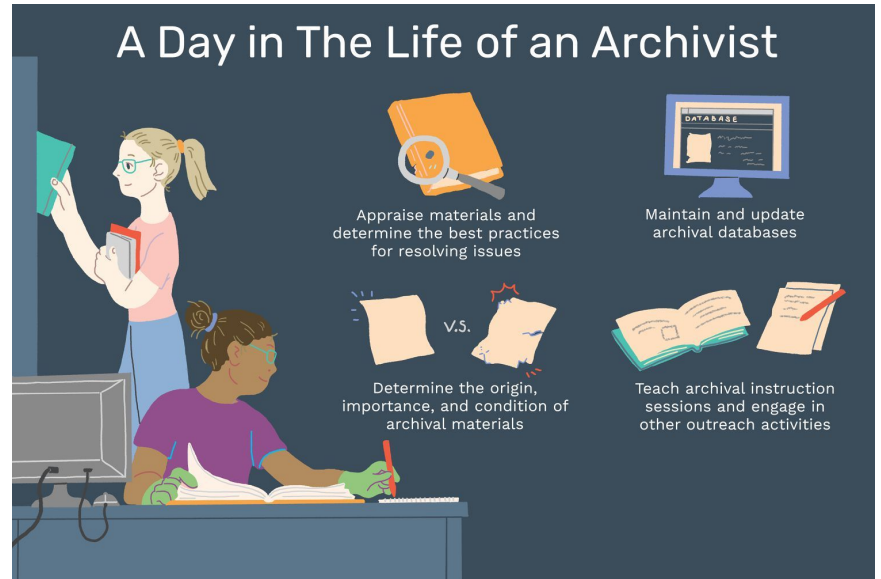
# Collections Development Policy

- What is it: A set of policies that address various aspects of collections management
- Why it's important: Supports mission and policies and guides decision-making
- What to consider
- What it includes: mission, code of ethics, scope of collections, accessioning/deaccessioning, loans, conservation/care, insurance and risk management, documentation/inventories, access, legal/ethical considerations, intellectual property



# Appraisal Criteria

- What to take
- What to keep
- How to make decisions
- Types of Value
- Size, scope, and condition of a collection
- Ability to make accessible
- Research value



# Reappraisal

## Why, When, How

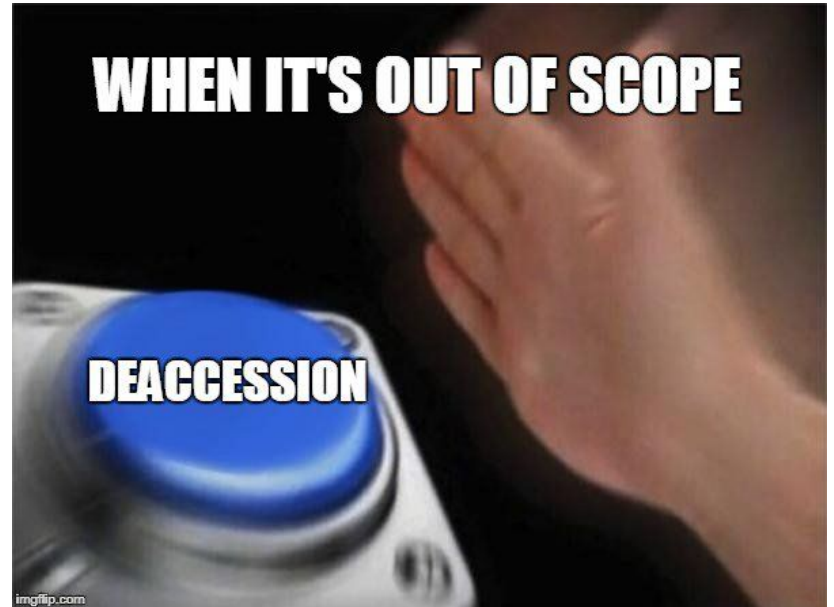
- Collecting policy has changed
- Perceived value of the material has changed over time
- It depends! Size of collections, staffing, etc.
- 10% of collections per year ideal?  
Realistic?
- Case-by-case basis as you're handling materials



# Deaccessioning

## Why, When, How

- Multiple copies
- Physical Condition
- Doesn't fit scope
- Cultural sensitivity
- Preservation/Conservation issue
- Danger to other collections or people



# Resources

- <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/ethics-standards-and-professional-practices/collections-management-policy/>
- <https://cmptoolkit.org/>

# Questions & Discussion



# Up Next

December 13, 2023

## Collections Appraisal Roundtable Discussion

- Continue today's discussion in the Facebook group or send us questions beforehand.
- Come with questions, scenarios, concerns, anything appraisal you'd like to talk about!