March 24, 2010

What Are Archives?

Ruth Bryan
Libraries

All Cultural Heritage Institutions

All Use Shelves

All Serve the Public

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All Provide Finding Aids
Museums: Unpublished, 3-D Objects
Archives: Unpublished, 2-D Objects
Libraries: Published, 2-D objects
Museums and Libraries: Items loose on shelves
Archives: Items in boxes
Museums and Libraries: Describe by item

Archives: Describe by folder

Archives and Libraries: Primary role: Providing information
Primary users: researchers

Museums:
Primary role: exhibits
Primary users: learners
Archives Are:

1. Stuff
Archives Are:

2. A Place

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Archives Are:

3. An Organization
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Relationship of Future to the Past

- The Past as Experienced (by individuals, families, organizations)
- Sources that Document the Past
- History Based on Sources
- Future understanding Based on Evaluating History
Archivists:

1. Acquire

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Archivists:

2. Preserve and Catalog
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Archivists:

3. Help researchers find stuff
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