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1. Background of the Archives.

The Nationaal Archief Suriname (NAS) located at Jagernath Lachmonstraat # 174 Paramaribo Suriname, is an amalgam of The National Archives Service (under the Ministry of the Interior) and the State Archives (overseen by the Ministry of Education and Development) in 2006 with the establishment of the Archives Act. The National Archives Service was established in 1956 by resolution of parliament on November 10, 1956, No. 3528 with the mandate of overseeing the archives of the various ministries and the related services as well as the care of the archives that are in custody of the Service. The archives were housed at the government secretariat, the Administration of Finance and the Courthouse. In 1982, the State Archives was established. It was in 1989 that the National Archives Service and the State Archives were merged into one service; The National Archives Service. All archive material from the State Archives was transferred to the National Archives Service under the Ministry of the Interior. The Archives mandate is to be responsible for the care of the archives in Surinam, in consultation with the Ministry of Education. Policy Ministry of the Interior, 2006 – 2010 / Archives

NAS is the final repository for transferred archives of both central and regional government agencies, as well as of parastatal companies and institutions. In addition, areas are allocated for archives of private institutions and individuals who make significant contributions to the political, social or economic life of Suriname.

In accordance with the Archives Act (S.B. 2006, No. 28), the NAS has the following tasks:

1. To effectively and effectively supervise compliance with the laws or regulations laid down by law regarding the management of the archives

2. Giving advice and providing assistance to government records regarding the management of archives;
3. Arranging, describing and otherwise appraising the archive documents in the National Archives;
4. Consulting, using, reproducing, editing and making available the archives contained in the National Archives;
5. Promoting the use of archives, with particular attention to young people, through publications, lectures, exhibitions and other means;
6. Promoting professional cooperation with other institutions, both in and outside of Suriname, in the aforementioned matters;
7. The acquisition of foreign documents or copies that are of significance to the cultural heritage of Suriname.

2. Description of Reception and Orientation to the institution.

My reception and orientation was welcoming as I was introduced to the staff. Despite the language difference, the staff communicated reasonably well in English, and that made it much easier for me. As part of my orientation, I not only visited the different departments, but I got an overview of what was done. I shared an office in the Inspection and Selection section with two other staff members, one of whom was given the responsibility by the director to ensure that I accomplish my tasks assigned to me as part of the fieldwork requirements.

The Archives is very modern compared to those in the English speaking Caribbean. They are equipped with trained staff. In the organizational structure, the institution has 5 departments:

- Business Management

- Relationship Management
- Public Services Department
- Material Management
- Research Unit

According to the website, <http://www.nationaalarchief.sr/over-ons/organisatie>

1. The Business Management department supports the other departments of NAS. The department consists of the following sections: Administration General Household Service Automation

2. The Relationship Management department supervises compliance with the regulations on the management and care of archives at government agencies. This section covers the Inspection and Selection section, which is responsible for inspecting and advising government agencies regarding the management of archive documents

3. The Public Services Department is responsible for making accessible and making available the archives and library collection for the benefit of the public.

4. The Material Management department is responsible for taking measures in the field of preservation and restoration of archives and is also responsible for the recording and processing of archives. The department consists of the sections:

Conservation and Restoration

Microfilm and Digitization

Film Video and Audio

Recording and processing and

5. Research Unit. This unit's main responsibility is to stimulate and develop research activities through publications, lectures, exhibitions and other means promote the use of archive records and conducting research and developing methods for operating oral history.

3. **General and specific duties assigned.**

General duties were somewhat limited due to the difference in language. Interface was restricted mainly with the staff. Even though it was a challenge, the writer saw it as an opportunity to hone in on his skills and put into practice, the theoretical knowledge learnt in the program.

The International Council on Archives designates June 9th yearly as International Archives Day. This year's theme was "Archives, Citizenship and Inter-culturalism." There were sessions and discussions culminating with a cultural show by the staff. I had the opportunity to meet and interact with University, Government and UNESCO officials and fellowship with the staff.

As part of the Inspection and Selection section where the ~~writer~~^I was placed, the staff would make regular trips to government agencies to assess the conditions of their records and advise them on records management principles. ~~The writer~~^I had the opportunity to visit the Ministry of Trade and Commerce in Paramaribo to see firsthand the way records are stored and retrieved.

~~The writer's~~^{My} specific task was to arrange and describe by using the ISAD(G) method, a 4 meter font named Alliance in addition to making a Power Point presentation to the staff of the status of the National Archives of Antigua and Barbuda and an overview of the Master of Arts in Archives and Records Management.

4. Explain ³ specific aspects that interest you most, professionally and why.

Three specific aspects of interest were:

1. Full level Arrangement and Description of ²fond using ISAD(G)
2. Records Management and Preservation of Archival records and
3. Microfilm and digitization

Being an archivist, the writer saw the need to learn about archival principles and practices that would aid in becoming more efficient and effective on the job. At the National Archives of Antigua and Barbuda, researchers were limited to persons with institutional memory to assist them in locating records. Even though they were finding aids for a number of fonds, none of them had full level arrangement and description to include data maps. Studying theoretical components of the principles of arrangement and description in ARCM 6002: Acquisition, Organisation & Use of Archival Materials, the writer was able to do the practical aspect of arranging and describing a 4 meter font of Alliance plantation from Commewijne, Suriname. Even though the information was written in Dutch, the writer was able to rely on the International Standard for Arrangement and Description ISAD(G), learnt in class, to guide the process.

The second aspect which had a professional impact was that of Records Management and Preservation of Documents. ^IThe writer was able to benefit from lessons taught primarily from two courses; ARCM 6001 (Fundamental of Archives and Records Management) and ARCM 6003 (Preservation of Archival Records in tropical Environments). The inspection team visited the Ministry of Trade and Industry's Registry Division to follow up on the progress on their development of a proper records and disaster management program. According to law, The National Archives of Suriname is mandated to "effectively and effectively supervise compliance

with the laws or regulations laid down by law regarding the management of the archives” (Archives Act S.B. 2006, No. 28). To this end, the team would regularly visit various ministry’s registries to check on compliance. There were two areas visited: the registry division where the active records were kept and a records office for the semi-active and non-active records. The policy is that records 3 years and older were transferred to the records office.

There are striking similarities between the registry departments in Suriname to those the writer visited in the Caribbean. Files packed in filing cabinets, boxes placed on top of filled cabinets and no proper database system for retrieval of documents. There is also the general use of government filing as opposed to records management procedures. Records not stored in ideal climatic conditions.

The records center where the semi and inactive records were housed was not in a suitable location. The center was part of a warehouse which housed among other businesses, a sawmill company. Unfortunately, there were visible signs of water damage on some records and termite infestation. In addition, the air-conditioning system was not functional. Preservation issues were addressed to lessen the deteriorating effects of improper storage and maintenance of the records. These included having a stable environment in the temperature and humidity, how to treat the documents that were termite infested and to treat the documents that were wet. Moreover, there were discussions on the importance of keeping the area free from dusts and other abrasive materials that can accelerate the deterioration of documents.

Thirdly, the final area that had a profound impact on the writer professionally was microfilm and digitization- reformatting medium. Having the opportunity to do LIBS 6501- Introduction to Information Technology, ARCM 6004- Managing Records in a Digital Age and ARCM 6003- Preservation of Archival Records in Tropical Climates, assisted greatly in

appreciating the operations. The necessity of reducing the inevitable wear and tear on fragile originals, have been substituted by preservation surrogates.

The microfilm and digitization lab at the National Archives of Suriname is equipped with some of the latest equipment and a trained staff. There is a planetary camera and a processor; Microsoft reader/printer, Phase 1 digital camera with its complimentary software.


The writer was able to apply his theoretical knowledge by seeing digitization best practice by the use of the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set (ISO 15836:2003). In addition, seeing first ^{hand} microfilm which were used for preservation made with silver halide. These were kept in stable, environmentally controlled storage. Silver halide 35mm microfilm, usually the master copy or first generation of microfilm created, is considered the archival or permanent copy. Other best practices for microfilm include: ISO 9878:1990 Micrographics – Graphical symbols for use in microfilming, ISO 4087:1991 Micrographics – Microfilming of newspapers for archival purposes on 35 mm microfilm and ISO 6199:1991 Micrographics – Microfilming of documents on 16 mm and 35 mm silver-gelatin type microfilm – Operating procedures.

During ^{my} ~~the writer's~~ practicum, the micrographics department was involved in a project with the Department of History at the Radboud University in the Netherlands. The project entailed the digitalization of all the slave registers in Suriname and to be placed on the University's database for research purposes.

5. Identify 1 problem area and how could it have been averted or resolved.

One of the mandates of the National Archives Suriname is to give advice and provide assistance to government records regarding the management of archives. To this end, the

Relationship Management Department supervises compliance with the regulations on the management and care of archives at government agencies. This section covers the Inspection and Selection Section, which is responsible for inspecting and advising government agencies regarding the management of archive documents. The writer was attached to the Inspection and Selection Section, a part of the Relationship Management Department. It is the view of the writer, that the section is understaffed and unable to effectively fulfil their mandate. There is a staff of 2 persons. As mentioned earlier, one of the department's functions is to inspect government records and advise them on records management principles. Suriname has over 15 government ministries with many more divisions or departments. With records created daily, and probably no retention and disposition schedule, it becomes extremely difficult and possibly highly improbable for the staff of two to adequately function meritoriously. Despite their valiant efforts, it is the writer's opinion that there should be an increase in suitably trained staff to assist in the inspection and selection section.



SNAPSHOTS FROM FIELDWORK ASSIGNMENT



Visit to Records Center in Paramaribo



On site visit to Ministry of Trade and Industry with colleagues



Registry Department in the Ministry of Trade and Industry



Schoolchildren on educational tour looking at the operations of the leafcasting machine in the conservation department at NAS.



Giving a presentation to the staff of NAS



Film Video and Audio Department at NAS



Part of the audience celebrating International Archives Day at NAS



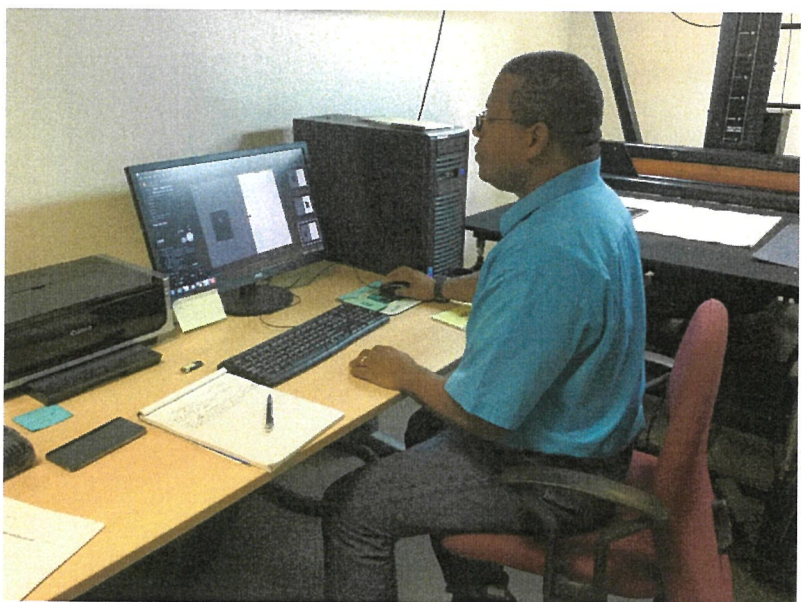
4 meter Font of Alliance to Arrange and Describe using ISAD(G) method



Working on the font Alliance



Inside one of the repositories at NAS



In the digitization room cropping slave register at NAS



Digitizing slave register at NAS

Nationaal Archief Suriname

Digitaal Journaal

Productie: N.A.S. *Reinoud van der Vlist*

Onderwerp: Agent Generaal in het Departement

June 2016

Datum	Naam	Begin tijd	Eindtijd	Begin nummer	Eindnummer	Inw. No.	Jaartal	Opmerking
15/6	<i>Sharmila</i>	8:00	9:00	2216	2320	15	1848	
15/6	Sharmila	9:30	10:00	2321	2373	15	1848	ende
15/6	Sharmila	10:00	10:30	1203	1250	16	1848-1852	
15/6	<i>Sharmila</i>	11:00	12:00	1251	1350	16	1848-1852	
15/6	Sharmila	13:00	14:00	1351	1450	16	1848-1852	
16/6	Stephan Butters	10:00	11:00	1451	1500	16	1848-1852	

Digitization Journal at NAS



Meeting with the Minister of Home Affairs M. F. Noersaliom

6. a

Development of your professionalism:

The attachment to the National Archives Suriname broadened the writer's perspective of how an archive should function. Being able to have hands on experiences with the practical as well as theoretical operations, gives one a greater appreciation of the role of an archivist.

✓ Learning to arrange and describe archives using the ISAD(G) method will assist the writer as he employs those methods which would assist researchers and historians in unearthing information. Working with the technicians at the Micrographics department with the knowledge that there are plans afoot to have a digitization unit at the archives here in Antigua, will certainly assist professionally. Learning the equipment and actually involving oneself in capturing pictures ✓ of slave registers, cropping and saving the information, speaks volume professionally.

Other areas which had a tremendous value on my professionalism include the Film Video and Audio Department, Conservation and Preservation department, IT department and the Research department. In the Film and Video department, ^Ithe writer was able to set up the metadata for two English recordings of speeches by the Prime Minister of Surinam Ronald Venetiaan on their entry into Caricom. The Conservation and Preservation department was also beneficial to the writer especially seeing the operation of the leaf machine casting machine. Both IT and Research Departments brought clarity as to the way forward for an archivist.

b. Name three theories and its correlation between them and what is done in archives.

1. Archival Arrangement & Description using the ISAD(G) method (ARCM 6002: Acquisition, Organisation & Use of Archival Materials)

2. Collection Care in Tropical Environments (ARCM 6003: Preservation of documents in Tropical Environments).

3. Promoting Use and Access to Archives (ARCM 6001: Introduction to Archives and Records Management)

Archival Arrangement and Description was one of the main subject areas that the class focused on in ARCM 6002 - Acquisition, Organisation & Use of Archival Materials.

One of the pillars of an archive is in its use. Archivists have the responsibility to provide the public with information that will assist them in carrying out their research in an efficient and effective manner. To this end, finding aids are one of the best ways to fulfil that mandate. The universally recognized tool- International Standard for arranging and describing ISAD(G), is a standard which registers archival documents.

During the course of the semester, we had a number of projects geared towards describing archives using the ISAD(G) method. This includes identity statements, context areas, context and structure area and conditions of access and use area for each level of the archive- font, series, file, or item levels.

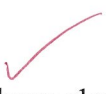
My major assignment was to arrange and describe the font named Alliance from 1936-2003. This was a sugar plantation which was located in Commewijne, Suriname. The font was over 4 meters of documents. The record in the ⁺fond^s contain of administrative, financial and production records from 1936-2003.

- Administrative records consists of correspondence of Incoming and Outgoing Mail between the periods 1965-2003, Agenda and Minutes from the Board of Directors 1974-1987, newsletters, bulletins, manuals and annual reviews.

- Financial records include Cash Books between the periods 1979-84; Bank Books 1980-1983; Quarterly Financial Reports 1973-1994; Receipts 1983-1994; Annual Financial Reports 1973-1996; Audited Statements 1983-1991; Draft Budget for Agriculture and Fisheries 1985-1985; Report to the Accounting Board for 1973-1987; Inventory 1983-1995 and Fixed and variable assets 1994.
- Production records contain Report on crop production on estates 1936-1977; Agricultural Statistics 1978-1985; Statistics on Citrus Cultivation 1969-1974; Correspondence regarding Citrus 1970-1983; Cooperative Organization of Citrus Growers; Citrus Experiment 1981; Production of Bananas 1979; Cultivation of Papaya, Potato and Makoesa; Farmer's Guide; Fishing in Suriname; Soya Projects; Report on Citrus cultivation in humid tropics and Monthly production information in orange January to December 1995.

Collection Care in Tropical Environments (ARCM 6003: Preservation of documents in Tropical Environments), was another area where the theory came alive during the attachment at the National Archives Suriname. The handling of materials must be done with special care. Archival materials should hardly be used. However, if it has to be used, then special care ought to be taken. The desire by archives in making their records public has led to an increase in its use leading to more damage of the documents. It is encouraged that all archive staff and volunteers be trained to handle records properly. According to Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler, there are a number of basic rules regarding handling practices will help to protect all archival records to include:

- Smoking, eating and drinking in areas where records are stored, used and exhibited should always be prohibited.
- Handle originals as infrequently and gently as possible.

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- Always have clean hands, and wear cotton gloves whenever possible especially when handling photographic prints or negatives.
 - Support fragile or heavy items when moving them to avoid damage or breakage.
 - Do not attempt to move too many materials at once or to move large or bulky items without help.
 - Book trucks or carts should be used when it is necessary to transport records from one location to another. They must be loaded carefully so that records are fully supported and do not protrude beyond the edges of the vehicle.
 - Never use pen or ink near archival materials; use soft pencil only.
 - Whenever possible, remove pins, staples and paper clips from archives, replacing them with stainless steel, brass or plastic clips only, if necessary to keep related items together.
 - Replace metallic-ended tags with stainless steel, brass or plastic tags if possible.
 - Re-shelve used materials as soon as possible after they have been returned, to avoid confusion or loss.
 - Check all returned materials to make sure they have not been damaged or folded during use.
 - When removing bound volumes stored vertically from shelves, the two volumes on either side should be gently pushed back to permit safe grasping of the two sides of the volume being removed.
 - If original materials are too fragile to handle, it may be possible to make reproductions and use those for reference. Ritzenthaler, Mary Lynn. Preserving Archives and Manuscripts, pp.67.

The writer was able to see trained staff handle documents from the repositories to the reading rooms in order for researchers to use them. Tray carts were used to put the documents. In addition, they were wheeled into the elevator to avoid any damage going up and down stairs. The conservation and restoration unit was integral to the overall preservation of the records. That unit worked on making sure that all documents for public use was in proper condition. One of their responsibility was to clean the archives and remove all pins, staples and paper clips and anything that would encourage ^{or} assist in the deterioration of the archives.

The rules of the reading room was visible with the staff making sure that persons using the archives adhere to the same. In addition, both the temperature and humidity were stable. The reading room was equipped with computers, microfilm and microfiche machines.

The third theory learnt with a correlation to what was taught has to do with Promoting Use and Access to Archives (ARCM 6001: Introduction to Archives and Records Management).

Addressing the outreach program, Ann Pederson succinctly states that *“archival work be understood and appreciated by the wider community, not just an educated few. Otherwise, archivists will reap the fruits of their own indifference: inadequate facilities, diminished funding, reduced service or at worst closure. History abounds with the losses of those who smugly catered to an elite.”* In addition Moya K. Mason echoes the same sentiments when she says that archivists if they want to increase the use of their facilities

“Must develop programs and services which inform the public about their holdings and reference procedures. Everything must be justified these days and it is no longer good enough to point out the value of preserving the past when large portions of our community consider last week a long time ago” ARCM 6001: FUNDAMENTALS OF ARCHIVES AND RECORDS

The National Archives Suriname has embarked on educational tours to school children throughout the country on a regular basis. This form of outreach highlights the profile of the archives and helps to make it relevant. In addition, the writer was able to be part of International Archives day (June 9th) 2017 under the theme "Archives, Citizenship and Inter-Culturalism."

✓ There were presentations from students from the History Department at the University of Suriname whose minor is in Archives. They gave a synopsis of documents they had researched from the recently returned archives to Suriname. Another outreach tool that was launched during the attachment was National Archives Information System. (NAIS) Other outreach methods include the use of the internet through the archives face book and webpage.

These three theories have had a direct correlation on the writer's work done at the National Archives Suriname.

c. Learning experience gained.

✓ The National Archives of Antigua and Barbuda, even though relatively large, ^{not?} does have the trained staff nor the departments that would constitute a functioning archives. There is not a digitization room, Media and Sound department, functioning conservation facility nor persons dedicated to arranging and describing records. Attending the Archives in Suriname became a learning experience for the writer who had an opportunity to absorb the various techniques and procedures that would assist in the development of the archives in Antigua and Barbuda.

d. Practice in using initiative and experience.

✓ The font Alliance was over 4 meters of documents written in Dutch. Not knowing that language, the writer had to rely on the staff to assist in translating. However, there were some difficulties in trying to explain the information in English. The writer used Google Translator which was able to translate into English which assisted in completing the assignment on time.

e. Practice in developing techniques for good human relations.

The writer had a ^{good} very interaction with all members of staff. There were opportunities where ^I he was invited to lunch and other social events. Despite the language barrier, there was a feeling and a sense of camaraderie between the staff and the writer. The writer sought to be at work on time, was always present, and at times, left late and worked on Saturdays so that the assignment would be completed. There were no known conflicts between us. Even now, emails and whatsapp messages are communicated between us.

Conclusion

✓ The fieldwork assignment to the Nationaal Archief Suriname was a great learning experience for the writer's personal and professional development. What made it more enjoyable and fulfilling was the warm and kind reception from the management and staff. Special thanks must be extended to the director Mrs. Tjien Foooh and her staff for making the writer feel loved and appreciated. The work learnt during the three weeks was, for the most part new. It is now incumbent for the writer to attempt to implement what has been learnt as to improve the functions of the National Archives in Antigua and Barbuda.

A good report