

Airborne Engineers Association

Archivist Policy Document

Guidelines and Procedures for the Management of Archival Materials

The aim –

To record and collate, to arrange storage and appropriate dissemination of all items submitted to the Association which relate either to the history of the association or to the history of Airborne units of the Royal Engineers.

To make available to those engaged in historical research any relevant documents held by the association and to control such access to avoid loss.

To inform the AGM of donations to the association during the previous year.

To inform members of the history of the association and of the operations of airborne units of the corps via articles in the Journal and other displays which, from time to time are deemed to be appropriate.

In the event of the demise of the Association, to arrange for the safe depositing of all the association's historical documents with an appropriate museum or library as decided by the Executive Committee.

The Archivist Member may recruit a deputy who will share the burden of recording and collating the history of the association and of Airborne Engineers. If no volunteer offers their service the Archivist or assistant does not have to be a member of the AEA

1. Introduction

This policy document outlines the protocols and standard for archivists responsible for the acquisition, preservation, management, and accessibility of archival materials. The purpose is to ensure the long-term protection and effective use of records of enduring value within the organisation.

The AEA has many documents which have been offered to members for storage and documentation. For some years Fred Gray gave willingly of his time to store and record these items. Prior to 9 Parachute Squadron moving Rock Barracks and becoming part of 23 Air Assault Regt, memorabilia and history documents were spread out and maintained by veterans. The Regt has some memorabilia, Diaries, Photographic records various trophies and presentations etc. These are recorded by the Regt and sub units and are not currently dealt with by this document. The MOD has regulations regards recording gifts etc. This may well be amended in the near future. However, primarily this document deals with material that has been offered up and maintained by volunteers of the AEA pre amalgamation.

It was decided at the Oct 2021 AGM that these records and memorabilia be secured and maintained in the RE Museum. Collection hand over etc was arranged by Fred Gray, Baz Bassett and the RE Museum. Key reasons were:

- Security storage
- Access to documents by serving and retired
- Research by other museums and sources

- Digitisation programme
- Control of loaning the material.
- Point of contact at the RE Museum (Currently Nick Gibson and Baz Bassett)

Arrangements were therefore made and these documents are now held at the RE Museum

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff involved in the handling, processing, and management of archival records, whether in physical or digital form. It covers the entire lifecycle of archival materials, from acquisition to eventual disposal or permanent retention.

3. Acquisition and Appraisal

- All records considered for inclusion in the archive must be appraised based on their historical, administrative, legal, or cultural significance.
- Items can be offered up to the AEA for inclusion, but initial requests should go via the Secretary AEA and the Archivist for assessment
- Archivists will follow established selection criteria to determine which materials are to be preserved.
- Criteria may cover these points, is it:
 - Interesting to the AEA
 - Is it replicated
 - Documents, condition, permission to hold, historical
 - Size and maintenance
 - Is for the RE Museum or Regt
 - Historical
 - Value, Insurance, delivery collection costs
 - Authority or permission to hold items
- Donors and creators of records must be informed of the terms and conditions of transfer or deposit.
- Items that may be better placed with the 23 Parachute Engineer Regiment will be offered to the Adit 23 Parachute Engineer Regt save for consideration.

4. Arrangement and Description

- The RE Museum is working with the Archivist so that records will be arranged in accordance with their provenance and original order, where possible.
- Comprehensive cataloguing and description will be undertaken to facilitate access and retrieval.
- Descriptive standards such as ISAD(G) if available may be adhered to for consistency and clarity. This format may be accessible from the RE Museum
- Further recording may be necessary, if and when digitised.

5. Preservation and Conservation

- Archivists are responsible for ensuring suitable environmental conditions for storage, including temperature, humidity, and security controls.
- Regular inspections and conservation measures will be implemented to prevent deterioration.
- It is hoped that the archivist and assistant archivist attend the RE Museum for an annual visit.
- Digitisation may be undertaken to enhance access and reduce handling of fragile originals.

6. Access and Use

- Access to archival materials can be arranged via the RE Museum curator and representatives via organisational policies, and donor agreements.
- Researchers must adhere to reading room rules and observe the proper handling of materials.
- Requests for copies or publication must be reviewed and authorised by the archivist. Any major items or those requiring removal is to be cleared by the Executive cttee.

7. Data Protection and Confidentiality

- Personal and sensitive information contained in archival records must be managed in accordance with data protection legislation.
- Access to restricted materials will be controlled and recorded.

8. Training and Professional Development

- Archivists are expected to maintain up-to-date knowledge of best practices and legal requirements through ongoing training and professional development. With the lack of experience, guidance and support will be sought by the RE Museum staff.
- Participation in professional networks and conferences is encouraged.
- There is already a good link with FORM (Friend of the RE Museum) and REHS the RE Historical Society.

9. Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed biennially by the archivist or as required to reflect changes in legislation, standards, or organisational practices.

10. Contact

For further information regarding this policy or the management of archival materials, please contact either the Archivist (currently Baz Bassett) mrb375@gmail.com) or the secretary AEA

M R Bassett BEM (Lt Col Retd)

Archivist AEA