

Ashney Randle

February 2, 2020

IS_LT 9473 Project Management

Project: Digitization of Army Individual Personnel Files using the ScanSnap SV600 in the Archival Research Room.

1. Why the project is being undertaken?

Outside of Official Military Personnel Files, the next heavily used resource used by researchers are the Army Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPFs), which focus on those who soldiers died overseas during World War II, and whose remains were repatriated back to the United States. In order to preserve this series, it is in our best interest to start digitizing these records as signs of wear and tear are starting to show on the documents and the artifacts (such as dog tags, clothing remains, etc.) be stored away safely with minimal exposure to prevent potential theft. Staffing levels in the processing unit are low, and the Preservation team is completely tied up in other major projects requiring extensive use of their digitization equipment. The ScanSnap SV600 is a portable, easy to use and affordable resource that all staff in Archival Operations can utilize, and staff in the Archival Research Room can help digitize these records by encouraging and teaching researchers how to scan these documents to further help speed up the process.

2. How the project fits within the organization?

The purpose of the Archival Research Room is to be a place that provides access to military records and makes sure those records are handled as securely as possible. Due to the age of the records and their high usage these materials are starting to slowly crumble apart,

Ashney Randle

February 2, 2020

IS_LT 9473 Project Management

and if the record is damaged or lost this prevents staff assigned to this department from doing their job. It is crucial that these documents are digitized and made accessible online in order to preserve this valuable, historical resource. This department also has the unique opportunity to help with digitization efforts due to having more staff, but also by being able to reach out directly to researchers to assist in this by teaching them how to use the ScanSnap SV600 and marketing it as another means of making copies of records for free.

3. What the project will accomplish?

This project will allow the agency to contribute to NARA's overall goal of digitizing the majority of its holdings by the end of fiscal year 2022, while providing an additional means of access to researchers who are unable to come to the facility for their research needs.

Strengthened relations with the general public by allowing them to also assist with the digitization process of these records will also help establish trust and show the people we are spending their tax dollars wisely. This also eases the strain on Archives Technicians who work in the Research Room and in the Processing division to meet agency digitization goals while still being able to work on the more routine daily tasks needed to keep operations going.

4. Who will be involved with the project?

Archival Research Room staff will order the IDPFs and screen the record upon request from researchers, and assist those interested in using the ScanSnap SV600 to digitize the record. During a lull in research room activity, a technician will be assigned to use the ScanSnap SV600 to also assist in digitization efforts. The Processing staff will take those digitized records and

Ashney Randle

February 2, 2020

IS_LT 9473 Project Management

create the necessary metadata and ensure the quality of the images is appropriate for upload into the NARA catalog. Lastly, interested members of the general public coming to do research who are interested in scanning documents and receiving free digital copies instead of paying for physical copies made on the photocopier will be involved as well.

5. How success will be measured?

Success will be measured by taking inventory of the number of Army IDPF's in our holdings, comparing it to how many cubic feet of records have been digitized by the end of the calendar year. Staff in the Research Room will keep track of how often researchers take advantage of using the ScanSnap to digitize their requested records by creating a spreadsheet taking note of how many used it during the day, and what record series were scanned, which has the added benefit of showing what other record series we can potential have digitized after this project is complete. The Processing Unit will take note of how many records needed to be rescanned, if necessary, before being uploaded into the NARA catalog. This will provide insight as to whether including the public in digitization efforts proved useful overall.