What is an archivist?

An archivist manages and preserves the recorded memory of society, including its governments, corporations, churches, social organizations, and individual persons. "Recorded memory" can consist of letters, photographs, electronic files, videos, DVDs, microfilm, documentary art and many other forms.

In order to carry out this work, archivists perform varied tasks including:

1. **Appraising**, or selecting, records with long-term value
2. **Arranging and describing** records so that people can retrieve and use them
3. **Helping** researchers interested in a variety of topics to use records
4. **Preserving and restoring** damaged or deteriorating records
5. **Providing expert advice** on the care and management of specialized media (e.g., electronic records)
6. **Encouraging public awareness** of the cultural significance of archives through various outreach activities
7. **Meeting legal obligations** in the areas of copyright, patent protection, privacy and freedom of information
8. **Offering records management advice** to organizations as required.

Archivists ensure that the records of today are preserved for future generations. The records can then be used to show the life, ideas and thoughts of their original creators, linking the past, present and future.

For further information about the archival profession, please visit the Association of Canadian Archivists' website at [www.archivists.ca](http://www.archivists.ca) or contact your local provincial/territorial association.

Developed by ACA's Public Awareness Committee

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