

ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



FRANKLIN
COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA

ESTABLISHED 1784



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DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS



Courthouse Annex Photo Exhibit

In June 2025 **Archivist, Heather Wade**, created an **exhibit in the Courthouse Annex**, featuring photographs from the 2022 Franklin County photo contest.

In October 2025, a time capsule project, **in partnership with the Archives Department**, was placed in the Judicial Center by Commissioners Horst, Flannery, and Ziobrowski. Art created by local students depicting themes related to the County, were placed inside the time capsule to be opened in 2050.



Left to Right: County Administrator, Carrie Gray, Commissioner Chair, Dean Horst, student artist, Felicity Dunkle, Commissioner John Flannery, and Commissioner Bob Ziobrowski

Judicial Center Time Capsule Placement



Charles Kaufmann
May 12 · 8s

Interviewing Heather Wade, archivist of Franklin County, PA, with Fred Mayer's 1866 gilded statue of Ben Franklin in the background. Fred Mayer was the maternal grandfather and artistic mentor of [Fred A. Demmler - 1888-1918](#).

Archives and Records Management's blog on "Frederick Mayer: Sculptor of Franklin County's Iconic 'Ben' Statue" caught the attention of film maker Charles Kaufmann of Starflower Films, who is working on a documentary about Frederick Mayer's grandson and namesake Fred A. Demmler. Kaufmann sent his film crew to Chambersburg twice in early 2025 to interview **Archivist Heather Wade** on Mayer's influence on Demmler, a talented artist from Pittsburgh who was killed in combat in the last days of World War I.

This Collapse of All Things: The Short Life of Fred A. Demmler, Artist will be a three-part film when complete. A segment of the film won the Best Documentary Short at the London Independent Film Awards in Oct 2025.

DCM Properties LLC

Hess, Planing Mills
200 N. Franklin St.
Waynesboro, Pa.

Corner N. Franklin & W. King St.

4300 700 5000

200 north Franklin Street

M-1

LAND VALUE COMPUTATIONS AND SUMMARY

288 - 273 = 15 x 60% 9
273
282 F
chq add per rc 9/11/00

NOTES chq add per rc 7-9-07

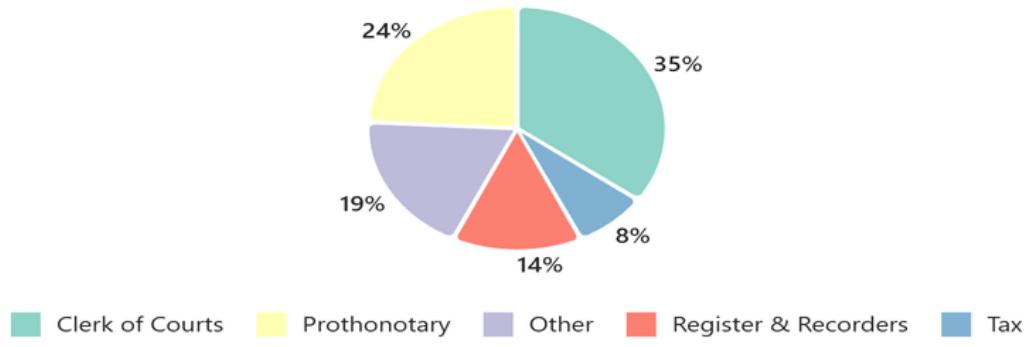
15 x 60% 9
273
282 F

FRONTAGE	
F 282	
CLASSIFICATION	
HOME SITE	

RECORDS USAGE OVERVIEW

DEPARTMENTS

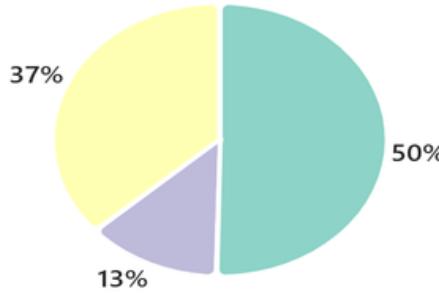
In 2025, Archives and Records Management staff fulfilled **256** department requests.



Top department requests

PUBLIC

In 2025, Archives and Records Management staff fulfilled **338 public requests:** **82 phone call requests, 134 in person requests and 122 email requests.**



Deeds Family Research Wills & Estates

Top public requests



PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

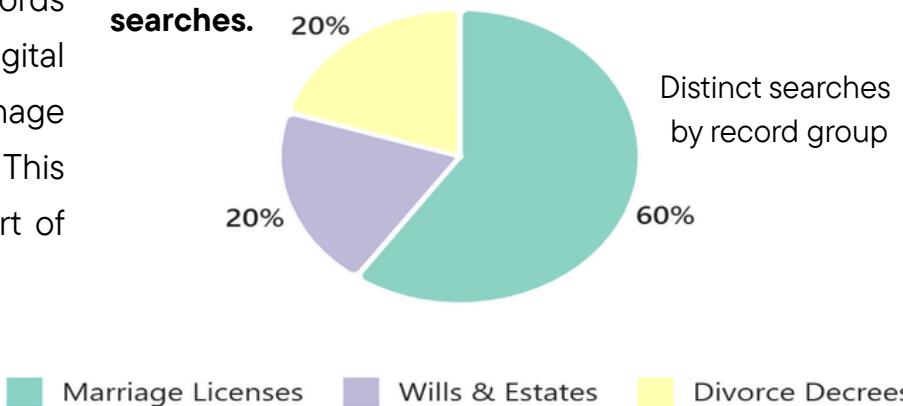
New Initiative: Archives and Records Management Department Liaison Program

In July 2025, the Archives and Records Management Department coordinated with all departments to select a staff representative to be that department's designated **records liaison**. Liaisons are trained by Archives staff quarterly on topics related to essential records management, preservation, digital archiving, and how to manage records within office spaces. This program is now a permanent part of Archives' duties.

New Software: PastPerfect for Archives cataloging and public use

In January 2025, a new catalog system was fully implemented for staff to quickly locate records and incorporate metadata to assist with temporary and long-term preservation based on the State Archives' County Records Manual.

A public facing catalog was also released for researchers to access digital collections. Year to date, the public catalog has had **9,225 distinct searches**.



VISITOR STATISTICS

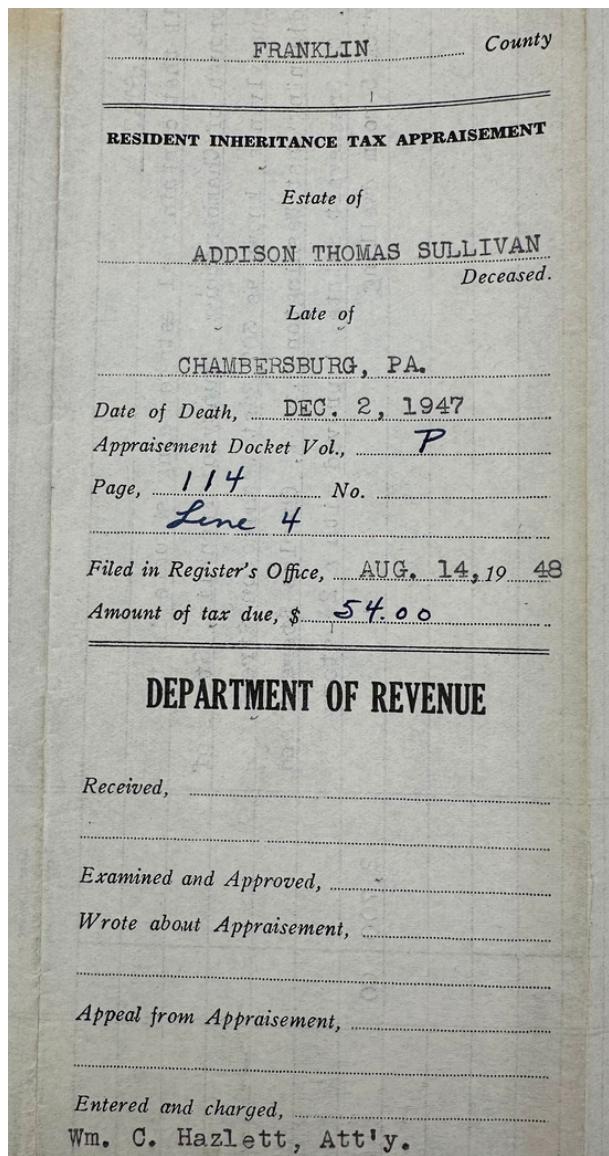
IN-PERSON VISITOR ORIGIN

Alaska
New Jersey
Utah

Maryland
Iowa
Indiana

Oklahoma
Ohio
Illinois

Alabama
Florida
Texas



RETURN ON INVESTMENT

In 2025, Archives and Records Management staff provided **325.25 hours** of service fulfilling public research requests. The Archives staff is dedicated to the Commissioners' goal of providing this free public service and continuing the printing fee of only \$.25 per copy. This year, staff time gave back the equivalent of **\$6,000** to visitors and community residents.

EMPLOYEE PROJECT SPOTLIGHT



Image 1: Serving the Public – Photo Captured by: No name

To increase traffic to our digital catalogs. **Archives Clerk, Fran Golden.** processed, scanned, and cataloged **7,383** Franklin County Naturalization records ranging from the 1838-1991. These documents are now available for researchers to access from our website.

In 2022 Franklin County sponsored a public photography contest seeking images that represented Franklin County's unique and beautiful qualities. All **300 entries** were resized and cataloged for public access in the Archives Public database. Forty of these photographs were also selected for exhibit in the Courthouse Annex display cases. This project was completed by **Archives Specialist, Briana McNames.**

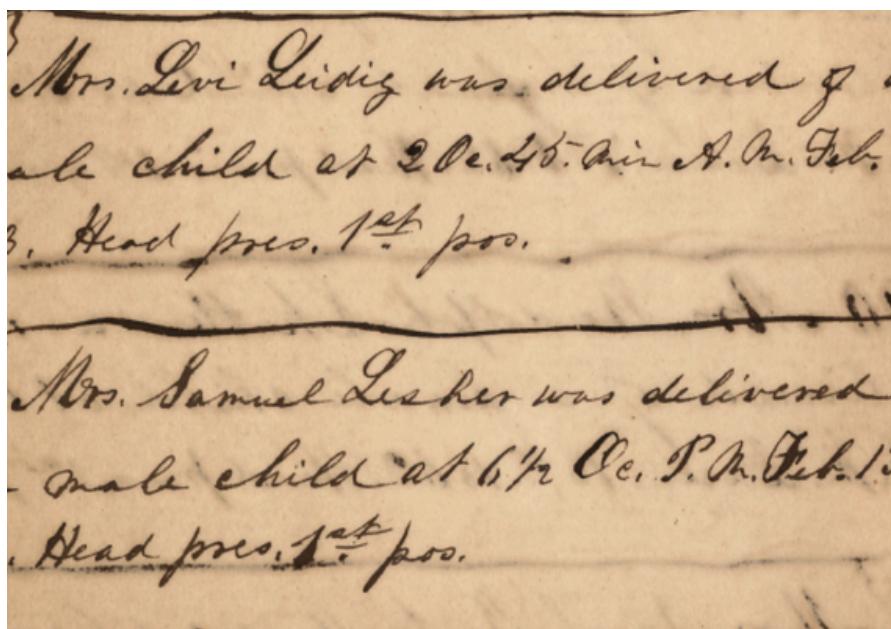


George Cawkwell (1881-1966) was born in England later immigrated to Canada before settling in the United States with his wife and children. A professional golfer by trade, Cawkwell became the head golf professional at the Waynesboro Country Club where he served from 1930 to 1941. In addition, to his teachings, he was a skilled clubmaker; golf clubs bearing the Cawkwell name are now considered collectible. He resided in Waynesboro, where he was a notable figure in the local sporting community.

EMPLOYEE PROJECT SPOTLIGHT



The Archives holds **62,790** estate papers ranging from years 1784-2023. These records were previously housed in the Register and Recorder's Office. After the County's consolidation of records to the Archives Building, these documents have now been cataloged, boxed, and made more easily available to researchers. **Archives Public Services Assistant, Kristina Shuman**, has processed **12,000** of these estate papers since February 2025.



Cecilia Scott, Archives Specialist, scanned and transcribed the three journals of Dr. Jacob Lewis Suesserott, a physician and dentist practicing in Chambersburg, PA from 1851-1857 and 1862-1886.

Dr. Suesserott's journals provide valuable information on select births in the area, earlier than our existing county birth records. This will benefit researchers who are looking for their ancestors who may have been born prior to 1893. Also, these journals give us an interesting overview, from a doctor's perspective, of what births were like during and after the Civil War era.

TEAM PROJECT SPOTLIGHT



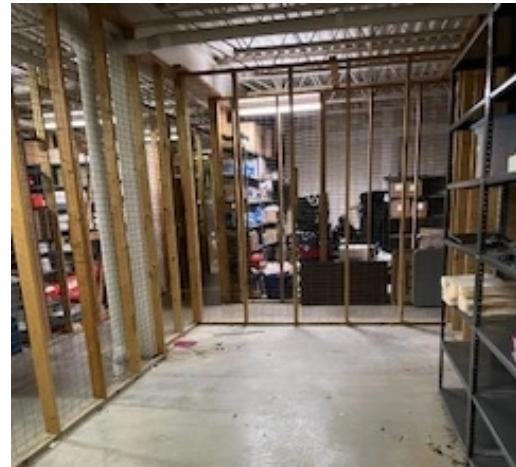
In order to keep the most historically significant, permanent, and vulnerable records in the “212” climate-controlled space, the Archives and Property Management teams moved **3,179 books** from 212 to the larger warehouse for cataloging and permanent placement.

In November 2024, Bexx Caswell-Olsen, Director of Book Conservation of the Northeast Document Conservation Center, visited and prepared a report of the Prothonotary books and dockets that were pulled from the Human Servies basement. Over 2025, the Archives team processed, cataloged, and shelved **913 of these records**.



The NEDCC site visit and report were made possible by a grant award of **\$5,858** from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

ACCOUNTABILITY TO DEPARTMENTS



EXAMPLE OF DEPARTMENT CLEANOUT PROJECT BEFORE AND AFTER

As a service to departments, the Archives and Records Management team is partnering with departments to clean out digital and physical spaces. In 2025, the departments of Drug and Alcohol, Fiscal, Adult Probation, Public Defender, Elections, Voter Registration, Tax Services, Planning, and Commissioners had specific disposition projects completed to decrease the amount of records that are out of retention. In total, **240 cubic feet** of records were securely shredded and approved for disposition by the State Archives, while **662 boxes and books** were accessioned in.

TOP SCANNING PROJECTS

#1 - Boundaries Project - For GIS/Register & Recorder/ Planning/ Tax/ Archival/ Public

- scanned **3,237** highway and sub-division construction plans and related records dating from the 1920s-1980s for a standard dataset of boundary documentation.

#2 - Divorce and Annulment Decrees - For Prothonotary/ Archival/ Public

- scanned divorces and annulments that occurred between 1884-1950; **1,186 total.**

#3 - Oyer & Terminer Case Files - For Clerk of Courts/ Archival/ Public

- scanned Oyer & Terminer (Criminal) case files from 1887-1919, containing **3,138 cases (21,030 pages total)**

FUTURE OUTLOOK

2026-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 1: Enhance Digital Preservation/Records Management Capabilities:

- Adopt a County-wide Information Governance Plan
- Develop digital preservation policies, procedures, and workflows based on IG plan

Goal 2: Improve Records Lifecycle Management

- County-wide standards implementation
- Conduct training for records liaisons
- Laserfiche Modernization Plan
- Prioritize permanent record scanning
- 212 HVAC Duct Cleaning

Goal 3: Increase Access and User Engagement (Public)

- Local History/Genealogy workshop in partnership with Historical Society, Library
- Outreach to professional organizations/companies: Bar Association, Surveyors, Engineers to use records
- America250PA Celebration exhibit (2026)
- County-wide oral history project
- Continue to prioritize record series with genealogical information

Grant Award for 2026

Archives and Records Management was awarded a **\$3,000 grant** from the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA) for a 2026 paid internship