

# TENNESSEE ARCHIVIST

The Newsletter of the Society of Tennessee Archivists



JOIN US IN KNOXVILLE FOR

**RED,  
WHITE,  
BLUE, AND  
RECORDED!**

COLLECTING AND  
PRESERVING POLITICS IN  
TENNESSEE

## Save the date!

The 2012 Annual Meeting will be held Monday, 10/15/12, through Wednesday, 10/17/12.

Do you have ideas for sessions or keynote speakers? Please share them with STA Vice President, Eric Head at [ehed@knoxlib.org](mailto:ehed@knoxlib.org). For priority consideration, please submit session proposals as soon as possible but no later than June 1, 2012.

*The photo of fireworks (above) was reused with permission via a Creative Commons License.  
Courtesy Bert23: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/pjb2332/404610419/>*

### ***In this Issue...***

News and Notes	2	Student Affairs	6
President's Message	3	Professional Notices	7
VP's Message	4	Tools for Archivists	8
Member Spotlight	5		



# News and Notes

## STA Officers 2012:

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## *Editors' Message*

Greetings, *Tennessee Archivist* readers!

Welcome to the Spring 2012 issue of our association newsletter. We have been looking forward to sharing it with you all, as we believe that this issue has something that will appeal to nearly every interest.

We are introducing two new features this spring: *Member Spotlight* and *Tools for Archivists*. The *Member Spotlight* will introduce you to one randomly selected STA member. This spring, Mandi Pitt-Reed has agreed to share a few details about herself on page 5. Thank you, Mandi!

Likewise, *Tools for Archivists* will highlight a new tool or a new application of a familiar tool. For this issue, Chapel and Gordon have teamed up to produce an article about Pinterest, the social media phenomenon that is on everyone's lips. Check out page 8 to learn more about Pinterest and how you might employ it at your institution. We look forward to receiving proposals and submissions from the STA membership for the regular *Tools for Archivists* feature.

Planning for the 2012 STA Annual Meeting is in full swing. Please take special note of the call for program proposals on the front page.

Lastly, we are putting out the call for a new student columnist for 2012-2013. Amanda Carter will be leaving us upon the happy occasion of her graduation from UTK! We thank Amanda for providing her perspective on the profession during the past year. If you know a current archives student – or perhaps you *are* a current student – who may be interested in writing a brief column, please share his or her name and contact information with us.

We hope to hear from you during the next few months with news for our Summer-Fall issue.

Warmly,  
Chapel D. Cowden and Sarah Shippy Copeland



# President's Message



Over the last several months, I have given a lot of thought about the state of archives in Tennessee – more specifically, how archivists should approach our work in the 21st century. While there are many individual archivists in our state who are doing outstanding work in productively applying digital technologies and social media in the workplace, I believe that our profession can and should do more to use these tools to engage the public effectively .

I really do not like to speak in generalities, but I will in this case to make a point. Archivists, in general, tend to be a very introverted group. We love our collections, and we take great pride in being gatekeepers to the past. Nevertheless, we cannot bury ourselves in our records. We must be advocates for the important work that we do, and we must be public servants if we want our work to have any value to those outside of our profession. This is where social media can play an extremely important role in elevating our profession and exposing our collections to a wider audience.

Social media is as ubiquitous as the telephone, and archivists need to recognize that more people expect to access our collections remotely. While we should continue to provide quality service and attention to visitors in our physical buildings, archivists must be willing to go where the users are, both online and in physical spaces. This means we cannot be afraid to step outside of the stacks and utilize social media to share our collections with the public.

In *Personal Archives and a New Archival Calling: Readings, Reflections and Ruminations*, Professor Richard J. Cox argues that "archivists need to develop a new partnership with the public, and the public needs to learn from the archivists the essentials of preserving documentary materials." According to Cox, "We are on the cusp of seeing a new kind of archival future, and whether this is good or bad depends on how well archivists equip citizen archivists."

The term "citizen archivist" has become a popular catchphrase in archival circles, but to put the term into practice in an effective and meaningful way requires a commitment and a vision for the future, as well as building a relationship with the public. Leaders in the archival profession must encourage ideas and participation from every level, reward those who take initiative, and share ideas on how we can better serve the public.

*President's Message continues on page 4...*

*Tennessee Archivist* is published by the Society of Tennessee Archivists. Please address all questions, comments, and submissions to:

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**Society of TN Archivists Newsletter Editor**  
**University of Tennessee at Chattanooga**  
**Dept. 6456**  
**615 McCallie Ave.**  
**Chattanooga, TN 37403-2953**  
**chapel-cowden@utc.edu**

Or

**Sarah Copeland**  
**scopeland01@clevelandstatecc.edu**

## Please renew!

Membership in the Society of Tennessee Archivists enables all of us who are dedicated to the preservation, administration, access, and use of archival materials to keep up-to-date with important developments and make a valuable contribution to the archival profession in the State of Tennessee. For more information, including membership levels, visit <http://www.tennesseearchivists.org/membership.html>.

To renew, please include institution name, phone number, and e-mail address (if applicable). Make checks payable to "Society of Tennessee Archivists" and mail to STA's **new mailing address:**

**Treasurer, STA**  
**Society of Tennessee Archivists**  
**MTSU Box 242**  
**1301 East Main Street**  
**Murfreesboro, TN 37132**



# Vice President's Message



## *Census, census, I've lost my senses!*

By the time this column is published, the 1940 U.S. Federal Census will have been released. Though the clamor and fever for this newly available record group may have subsided a bit, I am betting interest will remain high for the rest of 2012 and beyond. I am looking forward to delving into these images to discover tidbits of information about my parents (their first census) and others. Exploring these images will be a bit of a chore at first, as no index will be released with the images. Although this may harken back to the original way researchers searched for records, it is definitely not as convenient or useful as a good computer index.

The release of the 1940 census and the lack of an index for it leads me to ask the question, "What records do we hold in our archives that are not indexed, and as such, are as good as lost to patrons?" Knox County Archives holds several record groups, such as *Board of Education Minutes*, that could be of great interest to researchers, family historians, and others. These records remain very difficult to access because they lack indexing. The information inside them is lost to all but the most dedicated and hardy researchers.

The Knox County Archives are fortunate that current staff members and our predecessors have worked hard to organize the largest and most frequently accessed record groups in our collection and to make them searchable in a relatively convenient manner. Working hard at making records available is not something invented by us, nor is it only practiced by us; it is the norm across the various institutions in this field. That said, we still have a lot of work to do now to make these indexes more accessible via the internet and in ways only the future will show us. Much work also remains to index some of the "lesser" known and accessed record groups to help bring out the information they contain to the public at large.

What types of records does your institution hold that would be of great interest to patrons and researchers if only there was an easier way to "get into" the information? Making such information more accessible is a rewarding task and is one part of our job descriptions that makes the archival field such an interesting and enjoyable one in which to work.

*Eric Head*

STA Vice President/President-Elect

*President's Message, continued from page 3...*

Archivists need to be actively engaged with the public – both in person and online – whether they are a researcher, genealogist, historian, student, or simply someone with a curiosity about the past.

As archivists, we must not be afraid to take risks and experiment with new ways of working and thinking in the 21st century. Needs and expectations are radically changing in the digital climate in which we live. Archivists need to respond to those changes or our profession risks becoming a footnote in our own history books.

*Gordon T. Belt*

STA President

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# Member Spotlight

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## **Introducing: Mandi Pitt-Reed**

**Institution:** Student at Middle Tennessee State University (graduating in May 2012); Independent Archival Consultant at Davies Manor Plantation in Bartlett, Tennessee

**Years as an STA member?** 2 years

You can find Mandi on the web @ [Mandi.pitt@gmail.com](mailto:Mandi.pitt@gmail.com) or [www.mandipitt.blogspot.com](http://www.mandipitt.blogspot.com).

## **What has been your most memorable experience in an archive?**

In the summer of 2010, I had the pleasure of helping the Rutherford County archivist, John Lodl, begin a pilot project of scanning and cataloging community photographs. I enjoyed meeting new people, learning about the various communities in and around Murfreesboro, and finding out what some of our constituents really thought was important in the history of the community. My summer was greatly enriched by some of the characters I met while working at Rutherford County Archives.

## **What do you think is the most exciting opportunity facing archivists in the 21st century?**

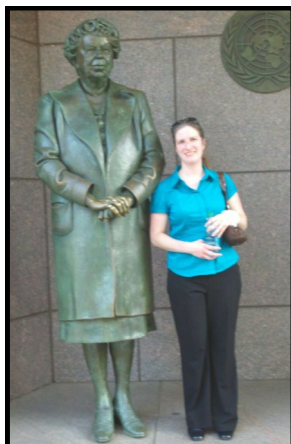
I think that archivists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have the opportunity to engage constituents in a whole new way through the use of digital collections, social media, and other web-based endeavors. I have enjoyed seeing how museums and some archives use their Facebook pages, twitter accounts and, in some cases, Pinterest accounts, to engage audiences and share their collections with the community and the world.

## **What drew you to the archives field?**

I completed my undergraduate degree in history at Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tennessee, in 2009. In the Spring of 2007, I was required to complete an internship as part of a course on Writing and Research in History. My professor put me in contact with Wayne Dowdy, the director of the Memphis and Shelby County Room in the main branch of the Memphis Public Library. I enjoyed the collection I processed there and volunteered that summer at the Nashville Room in the Nashville Public Library and at Metropolitan Government Archives in Nashville. I wavered away from archives over the next two years, but still loved the idea of making history accessible to the public, which led me to MTSU's Public History program. Once there, I fell in love with archives all over again!

# Student Affairs

**Editors' note:** Join us in thanking our student columnist, Amanda, for a fabulous year as Tennessee Archivist's first student columnist. Following her upcoming graduation from UTK, she will begin her new job with HistoryMakers. Best of luck to you, Amanda, in your future endeavors!



Hello, *Tennessee Archivist*! Since my final semester in University of Tennessee's Information Science program is coming to a close, this will be my final contribution to the student column. While this may be bittersweet for me, it is good news for any archival student who may like to contribute to the newsletter. I strongly encourage you to consider this opportunity since it is great experience for any student looking for a way to participate in the Society of Tennessee Archivists. Please contact Chapel Cowden or Sarah Copeland for more information.

In other news, it turns out that determination combined with a concerted effort to focus my education on archives has paid off. I am thrilled to report that I have been awarded a fellowship with the *2012-2013 Increasing African American Diversity in Archives: The HistoryMakers' Fellowship, Mentoring, Training and Placement Institute*. I will be spending three months of intensive training in Chicago, Illinois, before returning to Tennessee as a fellow of Franklin Library at Fisk University in Nashville. After all of the applications I submitted for archival and research positions across the United States, the chances of my remaining in Tennessee (and as an archivist) seemed slim, so it is particularly exciting to be able to go back to the city where I first found my interest in archives.

How was I able to qualify for this fellowship with only one archival and records management class under my belt? Good question and one I asked when I first began this program. Fortunately, the School of Information Science at the University of Tennessee allows students to focus class projects and practicums to areas of interest. I was also fortunate enough to find an assistantship at the Modern Political Archive on campus which helped me to gain more experience; so, contact your local library or archive and ask if they need a student assistant or a volunteer. Any experience is good experience. It also helps to participate in the student, state, and national organizations. Organizations provide like-minded professionals who can help you feel more comfortable networking, learning, and contributing your own knowledge. Society of Tennessee Archivists is one such organization that has given me the opportunity to learn and grow while obtaining my education. I will always appreciate this experience and I am excited to see how the student column will continue to evolve.

Amanda J. Carter

SAA-UTK President & MLIS candidate

## ATTENTION STUDENTS!!!

Are you interested in adding your voice to the archives profession? Are you looking for a way to boost your resume? Look no further!

We are currently seeking a new contributor for the *Student Affairs* column. The term is typically for one year. If interested, contact Chapel at chapel-cowden@utc.edu or Sarah at scopelando1@clevelandstatecc.edu



We have a Facebook page! Follow this [link](#) and join our group to get in the conversation!

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# Professional Notices

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## Are you a lone arranger?

The SAA Lone Arrangers Roundtable is seeking input from the larger lone arranger community regarding its demographic makeup and needs. The Lone Arrangers Roundtable, although affiliated with SAA, is open to any and all lone arrangers and supports the lone arranger community at large with resources and information. Please take a moment to fill out the survey below to help us focus our efforts and initiatives on targeting the current needs of lone arrangers. All of the information gathered is anonymous and we do not ask for your name or institution so that you cannot be identified. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LARSURVEY> [Editors' note: The survey will close on **April 30, 2012.**]

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact Christina Zamon ([christina\\_zamon@emerson.edu](mailto:christina_zamon@emerson.edu)) or Michelle Ganz ([michelle.ganz@lmunet.edu](mailto:michelle.ganz@lmunet.edu)). Thank you for taking the time to fill out the survey so that we can meet the needs of lone arrangers.

Thanks,  
Michelle Ganz, MILS CA  
Archivist, Special Collections Librarian  
Lincoln Memorial University Archives

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## Archivists without Borders

Dear colleagues:

We are drafting a proposal to form a U.S. chapter of Archivists Without Borders and would like to invite you to participate in the process. If you are interested in joining a working group to comment on the proposal, please send your name and e-mail address to Amanda Strauss ([amanda.strauss@simmons.edu](mailto:amanda.strauss@simmons.edu)).

Archivists Without Borders is an international organization, the primary objective of which is "cooperation in the sphere of archives work in countries whose documentary heritage is in danger of disappearing or of suffering irreversible damage, with particular emphasis on the protection of human rights." To read more about Archivists Without Borders, International, please see the website:  
[http://www.arxiv.org/en/asf\\_internacional.php](http://www.arxiv.org/en/asf_internacional.php).

We believe that forming a U.S. chapter of Archivists Without Borders is important. Not only will it allow us to participate in and support international projects, but it will also serve as an official network for advocacy and projects to support endangered archives and underrepresented communities in the United States.

We hope that you will consider joining us in this effort. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mario H. Ramirez ([mhramirez@library.berkeley.edu](mailto:mhramirez@library.berkeley.edu))  
Joel Blanco-Rivera ([blancoj@simmons.edu](mailto:blancoj@simmons.edu))  
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# Tools for Archivists

**Editors' Note:** *Tools for Archivists* is a new feature that we hope to share with you in each newsletter. We welcome submissions from our members on emerging tools or good old standbys that would be relevant to our membership.

## Putting Pinterest to Work for Your Archive

By Chapel D. Cowden with Gordon Belt

### What is Pinterest?

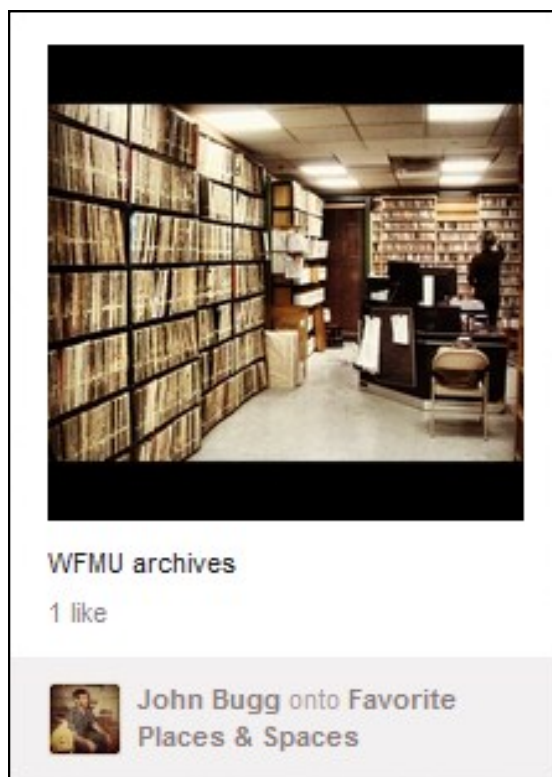
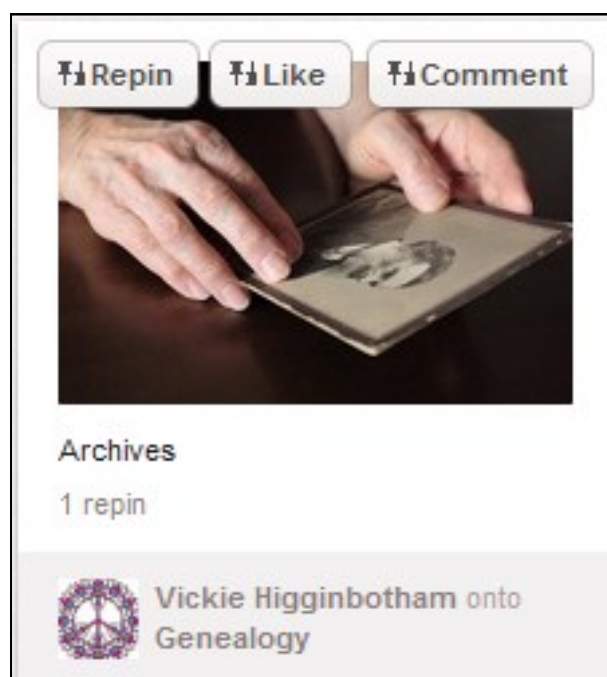
[Pinterest](#) is a new social bookmarking site that is taking the internet by storm. The folks at Pinterest provide the simplest definition of their service: "Pinterest is an online pinboard. Organize and share things you love." Creating and sharing information through pins and boards and browsing material that others post represent the fundamental functions of Pinterest.

A secondary but important element of Pinterest is the comment feature. Users are encouraged to respectfully comment on posts (called "pins"). Enabling user interaction with content is an important feature and one that could prove valuable for archives.

Pinterest is still in private testing and you must request an invitation to join. I (Chapel) requested an invite and was immediately sent an email notification that I was on the waitlist. I sent in my request on Friday morning and received an invite on Saturday morning. Once an account is activated, posting and organizing content can begin immediately.

### The Anatomy of a Pin

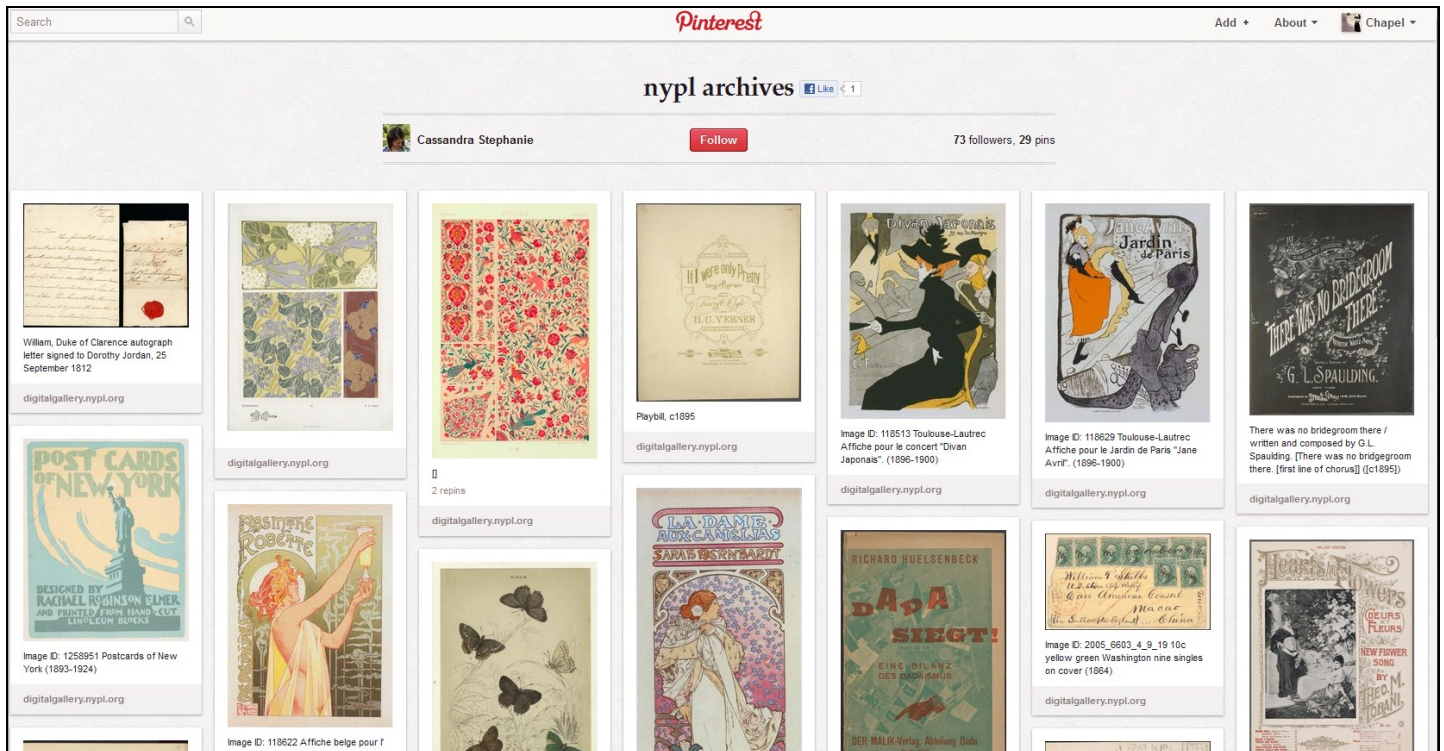
"Pins" are the elemental unit of Pinterest. Pins are images that have been grabbed from the internet or uploaded from a personal computer. Pins look like this:



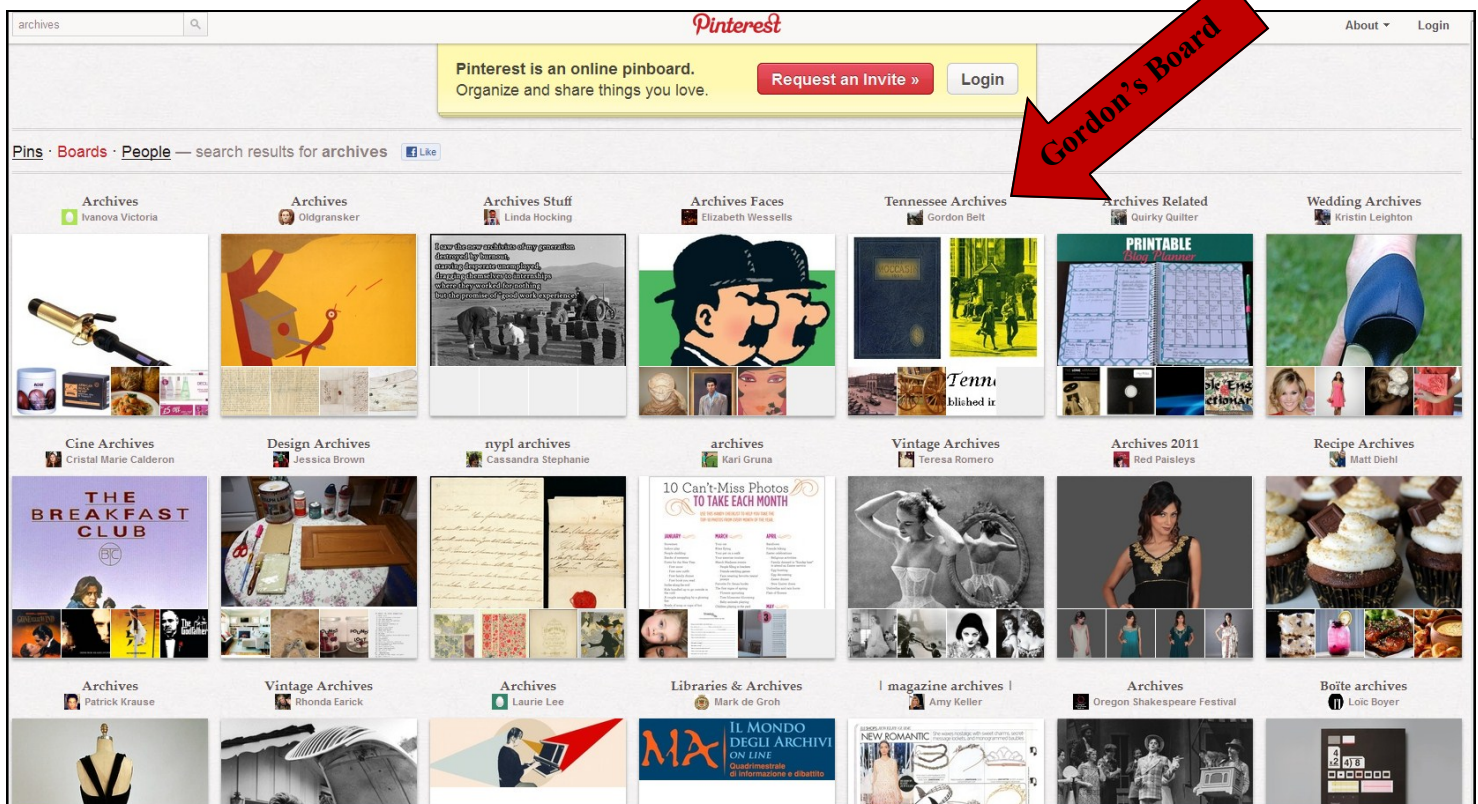


# Tools for Archivists

Pins are organized on “boards”. Boards hold topically related pins in a visually appealing layout. Below is a pinboard of materials from the New York Public Library:



Users can search for pins, boards, or people. A topical search for “archives” boards returns the following results (notice the visual appeal of the board search and our own Gordon Belt in the search results!):



# Tools for Archivists

## How is Pinterest different from other social bookmarking sites?

The primary way in which Pinterest differs is in layout. Long blocks of text, which usually go unread by internet users, are absent on Pinterest. As seen from the images above, Pinterest is visually-oriented in a way that other social bookmarking sites are not. As our STA President, Gordon Belt, points out in his recent [blog post](#) about Pinterest, it “goes [against the conventional ways of organizing information online](#) based on reverse chronology, as favored by Twitter and Facebook, relying instead on visual organization.”

In the same [post](#), Gordon references Mellissa Mannon’s (noted blogger on [Archives Info](#)) notion that “visual organization technique makes Pinterest [a very powerful tool for archives and cultural heritage organizations](#) looking for new ways to share online content, collaborate with others, drive Internet traffic, and generate dialogue about digital collections.”

## What are the applications for your archive?

Content curation is an area in which archives can excel. According to Francisco Rosales at [Social-Mouths](#) “We all know content curation can be a very powerful way to build authority around a topic. Select a couple of topics related to your industry and create boards to curate all kinds of content around them.” This seems like a natural fit for the archives profession and a great way to generate conversation on wide-ranging topics and materials.

Pinterest is also quickly becoming recognized as yielding high referral results-meaning that users discover a website through material posted in Pinterest. If archival repositories work on putting content on Pinterest, it could likely result in higher traffic to their websites and digital collections.

Gordon offers an excellent resource on his [blog](#) for additional ideas on using Pinterest: “For an archivist’s perspective on Pinterest, I’d encourage you to visit Melissa Mannon’s blog, [ArchivesInfo](#), for [a thorough review](#), along with links to additional content, and [a few ideas on how to use Pinterest as an outreach tool](#).”

## Want to Learn More?

You can also check out the following links for further information (thanks to Gordon for compiling the bulk of this list on his [blog](#)):

[Pinterest listed among the "50 Best Websites of 2011"](#) - Time magazine

[Pinterest: Everything You Need To Know Is In This Massive Post](#) - SocialMouths

[Meet Pinterest: A Private Social Pinboard That Collects Your Online Memories](#) - Mashable

[Pinterest Joins Twitter And Facebook As The Newest Self-Expression Engine](#) - Techcrunch

[How to Get a Pinterest Invite](#) – Mashable

[Five More Ways to Use Pinterest in Your Library](#) – iLibrarian

[Pinterest online curation pinboard with major promise](#) –Joe Murphy

[Pinterest nearly equals Twitter and Google in referral traffic](#) -- CNET

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# *Tools for Archivists*

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See also several repositories with a Pinterest presence:

[Smithsonian's Archives of American Art](#)

[Bluffton University Archives and Special Collections](#)

[Accessible Archives](#)

[UVa Special Collections](#)

[University of Maryland Special Collections](#)

[University of Iowa Special Collections & University Archives](#)

## **Calling All Archivists!**

Pull out your laptop, iPad, pencil or quill and tell us all about it!

We are always seeking submissions for *Tennessee Archivist*.

Tell us about your archive, a co-worker,  
a special project, a digital collection – the topics are limitless.

Please send ideas and submissions for upcoming  
newsletters to Chapel at [chapel-cowden@utc.edu](mailto:chapel-cowden@utc.edu) or Sarah at  
[scopelando1@clevelandstatecc.edu](mailto:scopelando1@clevelandstatecc.edu).