American artillery-men, manning an M7 105mm self-propelled howitzer, fire at the enemy in John Scott's 1945 ink on paper, 105mm Self-Propelled Gun. (Army Art Collection)

December 1989 invasion of Panama. Furthermore, the collection features works detailing the Army in peacetime, the Army in the Cold War, and the Army's various branches, such as Infantry, Field Artillery, Aviation, Transportation, Signal Corps, and Chaplain Corps.

The Army Art program received a major endorsement following Operation Desert Shield/Storm. In 1990–91, the Army sent artists to Saudi Arabia to document the preparations for war and combat operations. Afterwards, the Army exhibited the artwork. The Army Chief of Staff at that time, Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, was so impressed with the Army artists' work that he mandated a permanent posi-

tion for an artist with the U.S. Army Center of Military History. The position became known as the Army Artist-in-Residence, and subsequent artists have produced artwork depicting the Army's role in the Balkans, the aftermath of September 11, 2001, and military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. The current Artist-in-Residence, Master Sergeant Martin Cevantez, has deployed to Afghanistan, as well as Haiti to document earthquake relief operations.

Currently, the Army Art Collection is housed in downtown Washington, DC, largely out of view of the public. Some pieces of the collection are on display in the Pentagon, while others are on loan to museums. The collection will be moved later this year to the new Museum Support Center at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Pieces from the Army Art Collection will be featured in the exhibits and galleries of the future National Museum of the United States Army, which will open at Fort Belvoir in June 2015.

For more information on the Army Art Collection and to view Army art, visit *www.history.army.mil*

Matt Seelinger is Chief Historian of the Army Historical Foundation in Arlington, VA.

AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVID S. FERRIERO
ARCHIVIST OF THE UNITED STATES

Interview by Benjamin Guterman

David S. Ferriero was confirmed as 10th Archivist of the United States on November 6, 2009. Previously, Mr. Ferriero served as the Andrew W. Mellon Director of the New York Public Libraries (NYPL). He was part of the leadership team responsible for integrating the four research libraries and 87 branch libraries into one seamless service for users, creating the largest public library system in the United States and one of the largest research libraries in the world. Mr. Ferriero was in charge of collection strategy; conservation; digital experience; reference and research services; and education, programming, and exhibitions. Among his responsibilities at the NYPL was the development of the library's digital strategy, which currently encompasses partnerships with Google and Microsoft, a web site that reaches more than 25 million unique users annually, and a digital library of more than 750,000 images that may be accessed free of charge by any user around the world. Before joining the NYPL in 2004, Mr. Ferriero served in top positions at two of the nation's major academic libraries, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, MA, and Duke University in Durham, NC. In those positions, he led major initiatives including the expansion of facilities, the adoption of digital technologies, and a reengineering of printing and publications. In this interview, he addresses some of the major issues now confronting the National Archives and other government agencies.

In what major ways have your responsibilities at the New York Public Library system helped you as Archivist of the United States?

I think my many years in libraries, including the New York Public Library, has provided me with a certain set of technical competencies around organization of information. More importantly, those years have made me think about

how users interact with information and about their experience with the institution. In libraries as well as archives, the introduction of technology—with the Internet, digitization, and creating digital content—has gotten us thinking about how we exploit these tools to improve and enhance the preservation of and access to our materials.
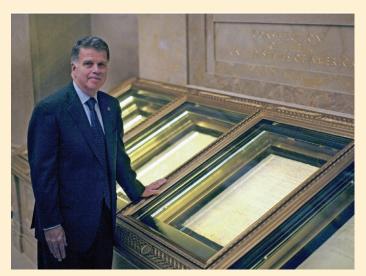
Archival theory and procedures are significantly different from those of library science. Do you think these differences are reflected in how you manage NARA versus how you managed the NY Public Library system?

I don't think there are great differences. The mission of the Archives—and libraries and other research institutions—is to collect, protect, and encourage the use of its holdings. From the national level down to the local, we're all research centers with this shared goal.

A recent government-wide self-assessment report revealed that 79 percent of federal agencies are at risk of improperly destroying valuable records, particularly e-mails. NARA already has interagency records management training and guidelines in place, so what improvements do you plan?

This level of risk to our nation's records is unacceptable, and I am determined to work with federal agencies to improve records management performance across the federal government.

Today, the majority of federal records being created are electronic records. Essential to managing these electronic records is developing cost-effective electronic records management tools that work—then integrating them into agency IT systems. Most agencies develop IT systems without thinking about records. Later, they must go back and spend more money to capture, preserve, and provide access to the records. Or—the records are simply lost and cannot be used over time. To improve this situation, we recommend that records management experts be included in the design and development of information systems. Accordingly, we at NARA are focusing on reclaiming our records management leadership role by finding, encouraging, and sharing cost-effective IT solutions needed to meet the electronic records management challenges of today and the future. This fall, Vivek Kundra and I will be co-hosting a joint meeting of the Chief Information Officers Council and the Federal Records Council at the

National Archives. I see this as one step towards the collaboration that's needed for records management.

Regarding declassification of documents, two major obstacles to the process have been differing review standards and multiple reviews among the government agencies involved. Can the new National Declassification Center substantially address those difficulties and thus reduce the backlog?

The National Declassification Center (NDC) was set up at the beginning of this year to streamline declassification processes, facilitate quality assurance, and provide training for declassification reviewers. There are now some 2,000 different security classification guides at work in the government, and it's the NDC's mission to lead an interagency effort to develop common declassification processes among agencies. The NDC will also accelerate the processing of historically valuable classified records in which more than one agency has an interest. And it will prioritize declassification based on researcher interest and the likelihood of declassification.

A major obstacle in the referral process has been when more than one agency has an interest in a document, and each had to examine it prior to declassification. One way the NDC will streamline this process is to have reviewers from interested agencies come to the National Archives at College Park, Maryland, and complete the review in one place. This will avoid the time-consuming process of sending materials back to agencies and waiting for them to respond. To further cope with the backlog, the Department of Defense has already opened its own Joint Referral Center (JRC) to clear referrals belonging to members of the defense community prior to their entering the declassification processes of the NDC.

The NDC has also created a Prioritization Plan that will serve as a roadmap for declassifying and releasing federal records and presidential materials. On June 23, we held an open forum and are asking for public comment on this plan online to help determine the priorities for declassifying categories of records.

Recent technical problems and delays with the Electronic Records Archives (ERA) have many concerned about the readiness of the National Archives to manage and provide access to the enormous quantity of incoming electronic records. Technically, where must the breakthroughs be?

It's important to remember that major parts of ERA are already operational. ERA is now actively managing and supporting queries on approximately 80 terabytes of electronic records, including the presidential records of President George W. Bush and ever-increasing numbers of congressional and federal records.

Archivist David S. Ferriero with the Charters of Freedom

There are challenges related to the sheer complexity of any large development effort, however. Any time a new IT system supports many user groups, business processes, policies, and types of information, development will be complicated. ERA is no exception, and no technical breakthrough will make this kind of challenge go away.

There are some purely technical challenges to building a large electronic records archive as well, including scalability to store very large quantities of electronic records and preservation of the most significant properties of records while transforming the records from obsolete formats to more accessible ones.

This past spring, NARA worked with our ERA contractor to develop a prototype of both a preservation framework for managing the migration of records from one format into another and an online public access system that will make electronic records (and all NARA records) easier for the public to find and use. Over the next year, the functions of the prototypes (and other new development) will be integrated into the production ERA system. The Online Public Access prototype is our first step in integrating previously stove-piped systems, so that the user will be able to search in one place to find our online records and information about all of our holdings, including electronic records.

While the preservation framework will meet many of our needs, the tools available to reliably identify files in a wide range of formats cannot yet identify all the formats NARA has. We aren't waiting for a breakthrough in order to move forward, though, since there are so many useful things we can already do. NARA, like many other archives struggling with these problems, will continue to search for better ways to manage large and diverse collections of electronic records, ensure records are available in usable formats, and make electronic records available to researchers. In the meantime, NARA is already relying on ERA to manage a large number of critical records and ERA's capabilities will expand over the next few years.

Aside from the urgent and prominent issues that NARA faces, do you have a particular personal priority, such as publications or digitization, for example, that you plan to advance?

My priorities are getting the ERA launched on schedule, and getting it right; changing the culture of the agency so we're more nimble, more risk-taking, and leaders in the use of technology; and getting more and more of our records in digital form.

I am very excited about using social media to engage the public and staff in conversations—to share ideas, gain new insights and exchange information. Our researchers will find that the Archives now has six blogs, 16 Facebook pages, seven twitter sites, plus our own YouTube and Flickr sites.

I want the Archives to be a leader in harnessing new technologies to transform government into a more collaborative and participatory entity.

Generally, what kinds of insights or lessons have you gained from visiting NARA facilities nationwide? Can you give an example or two?

My travels around the country to meet the NARA staff in their workplaces have provided me with the best orientation a new Archivist could receive. It has given me an opportunity to listen to my staff, see their work conditions, and get a sense of what it is like to be a "customer" of the agency in those facilities. In all cases I have met dedicated staff, passionate about their work, and trying their hardest to deliver good service. And I have listened to concerns expressed about a variety of workplace issues; e.g., technology, facilities, advancement opportunities, etc.

As I learned at the New York Public Library, the farther you are from Fifth Avenue, in this case Pennsylvania Avenue, the more you feel forgotten and less a part of a greater whole. Working on ways of addressing that has been a priority for me, as has the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey as a measure of job satisfaction. I am pleased to report that some 82 percent of the staff participated in this year's survey compared to 53 percent last year. This survey provides for me a baseline for improving the quality of the workplace. A staff volunteer task force met with me for the first time this week to help me address the results of this year's survey.

As the National Archives ventures into the use of the new social media, such as Flickr and Facebook, and as you now write a blog, what does the agency aim to achieve with these efforts?

We intend to become a leader and innovator in all aspects of social media in the federal government. Social media tools can help us make it easier for researchers, students, and the general public to learn about and make use of the billions of items in our collection. And just as important, they give the public direct ways to reach us: asking questions, telling us what's important to them, helping us plan for the future.

The essence of the work we do every day is rooted in the belief that citizens have the right to see, examine, and learn from the records of their government. Social media tools and blogs enable online public engagement and reach users where they are.

In the past year, we developed a number of successful social media projects. Now, we are developing a comprehensive social media strategy for the agency, which will include internal as well as external communications efforts using new media tools.

Digitization and online access to government records can also benefit from the collaborative expertise of the many, including the citizen archivists, researchers, federal agencies, the private sector, and IT professionals.