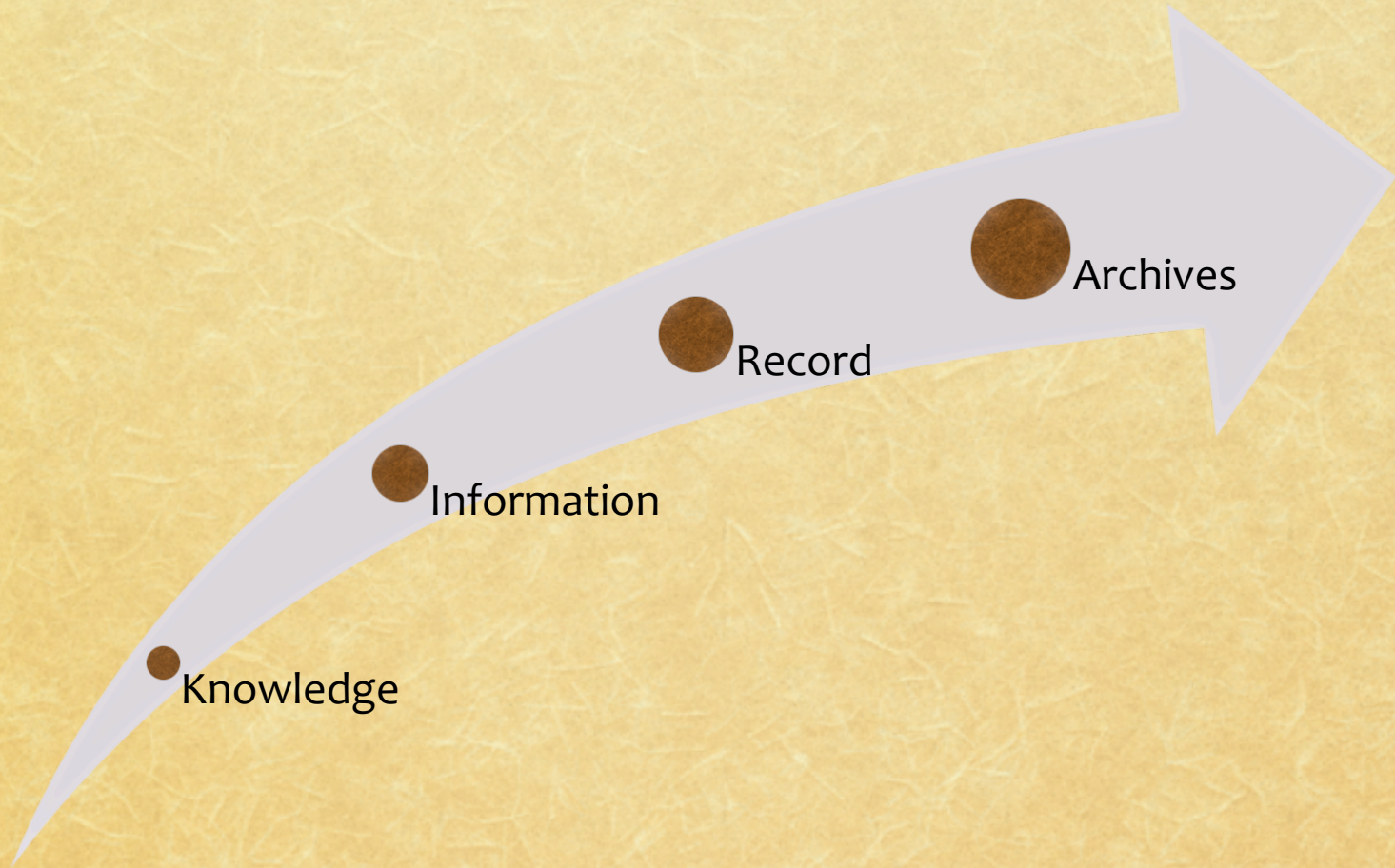


Archives: Basic Concepts

Archives Project Meeting
03/12/2014

From the Beginning...



Records

- ◆ By product of a process or transaction
 - ◆ Evidence that a process or transaction occurred
 - ◆ Created in the course of everyday life
- ◆ Objective
 - ◆ Documentary value
- ◆ Represent:
 - ◆ Actual recollections
 - ◆ Decisions
 - ◆ Opinions

Records...

- ◆ ... do not exist in isolation.
- ◆ Derive meaning from:
 - ◆ Content
 - ◆ The substance of a record—What it is.
 - ◆ Text, images, sound, etc.
 - ◆ Structure
 - ◆ How a document was created and maintained
 - ◆ Context
 - ◆ Who, when, where, why the record was created
 - ◆ A record gains context as part of a larger body of records

Records are...

- ◆ Static
 - ◆ Record remains as created
- ◆ Unique
 - ◆ Content, Structure, and Context create uniqueness
- ◆ Authentic
 - ◆ Record can be proven to be what it appears to be

Records to Archives

- ◆ Formal process for care of records:
 - ◆ “chain of custody” or “chain of preservation”
- ◆ Continuity from creation to archives is optimal
- ◆ “Optimal” is often not the way it works...

Provenance

- ◆ “Principle of Provenance”
 - ◆ Records from one source kept together
 - ◆ Not separated into artificial groupings
 - ◆ Respect for creator of the records
- ◆ Archives and libraries are very different.
 - ◆ Archives arrange by source or creator.
 - ◆ Libraries arrange according to a subject classification system.

The Twilight Zone

- ◆ Some materials may or may not be archival:
 - ◆ Publications
 - ◆ Ephemera
 - ◆ Photographs
 - ◆ Other media
- ◆ Are they related to a particular record or records?

Three Dimensions

- ◆ Artefacts
 - ◆ Plaques, medals, trophies
 - ◆ Deliberately created to mark an event
 - ◆ Not documentary evidence
- ◆ May provide important contextual information
- ◆ Link must be maintained between object and context

Types of Archives

- ◆ Institutional
 - ◆ Preserve the institutional record
- ◆ Hybrid
 - ◆ Institutional and non-institutional materials
- ◆ Collecting
 - ◆ Collect materials for research use
- ◆ Community based
 - ◆ Local focus
- ◆ Museum
 - ◆ Materials related to museum or it's focus
- ◆ Activist
 - ◆ Promotes a political or social agenda
- ◆ Integrated institutions
 - ◆ Archives combined with other “memory-oriented” organizations

Dreams and Visions...

- ◆ Vision
 - ◆ What do we want to achieve?
- ◆ Mission
 - ◆ How do we want to achieve it?
- ◆ Mandate
 - ◆ Legal authority and specific responsibilities of the institution
- ◆ Scope
 - ◆ What do we collect?

