Archivists Respond to the Great East Japan Earthquake

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Introduction
On March 11, eastern Japan was devastated by the gigantic earthquake and tsunami. Death toll rises to 15,689 on Aug.10 and about 5,000 people are still missing . Approximately 100,000 people live in evacuation centers. The Fukushima nuclear power plants are still ongoing threats. The purpose of this poster is to share information about archivists’ response to the Great East Japan Earthquake and ask your wisdom and advice to help us solve the problems. Due to the seriousness of the situation, this research is based on information open to the public.

Archivists in Japan
We have no organization of individual archival professionals like SAA, as we have Japan Society of Archives Institutions and the Japan Society for Archival Science. In this poster, the word “archivists” includes researchers in history, local historians, conservators, curators, and librarians for special collections.

Public Archivists
Public Officers at first = took care of the victims & evacuation centers to secure safety and supplies

Archivists & Historians in NPO
The Network for Historical materials was organized just after the Hanshin Great Earthquake in 1995. It offers volunteers to rescue historical materials as well as technical and financial aids. The Local Networks are established and activated.

Archivists of National Archives of Japan
The number of regular staff has increased from 43 into 49, because the Management of Public Records Law is enforced. Conservators are consulted how to save records.

Yamagata Net rescues a lot of historical materials and provides supplies

Tsunami killed all curators and librarians

Miyagi Prefectural Archives

Onagawa Public Records

Fukushima Prefectural Archives

Comparison between Miyagi and Fukushima Prefectural Archives

What is the role of Archivists ?
I consider what archivists can do under circumstances.

• Prepare the disaster plan in advance
• Protect archives including active records and electronic records
• Restore damaged records or give information of what to do, not to do
• Keep recording
• Collect and Provide information as a professional
• Survey all records and maps
• Protect People’s rights and memory and more ・・・

In Japan, the Japan Society for Archival Science plans to start certifying people as archivists. For further information, please visit these websites.

Further information, please visit these websites.

http://rekishishiryonet.wordpress.com/
Miyagi Shiryou net (Network for preserving historical materials)
http://www.miyagi-shiryounet.org/00/front_en.htm
saveMLAK
http://savemlak.jp/

Discussion

❖ Importance of records and archives
❖ People’s Identity
❖ A very Few Archival Repositories and Archivists
❖ Many Archival Materials and records damaged
❖ Issue of active public records
❖ Issue of electronic records
❖ Not only 3.11 but Aftershocks in April
❖ No Gas & Heat and Little Foods in March
❖ Heavy Rain and Flooding in July
❖ Forgotten Disaster Areas = Ibaraki & Chiba
❖ Other Megaquakes in Nagano or Shizuoka
❖ Time-ticking race to save records
❖ Save contents with digitization
❖ On-going disaster

Fukushima Nuclear Power Plants and Radiation

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