

Celebrating 85 Years of AHIMA

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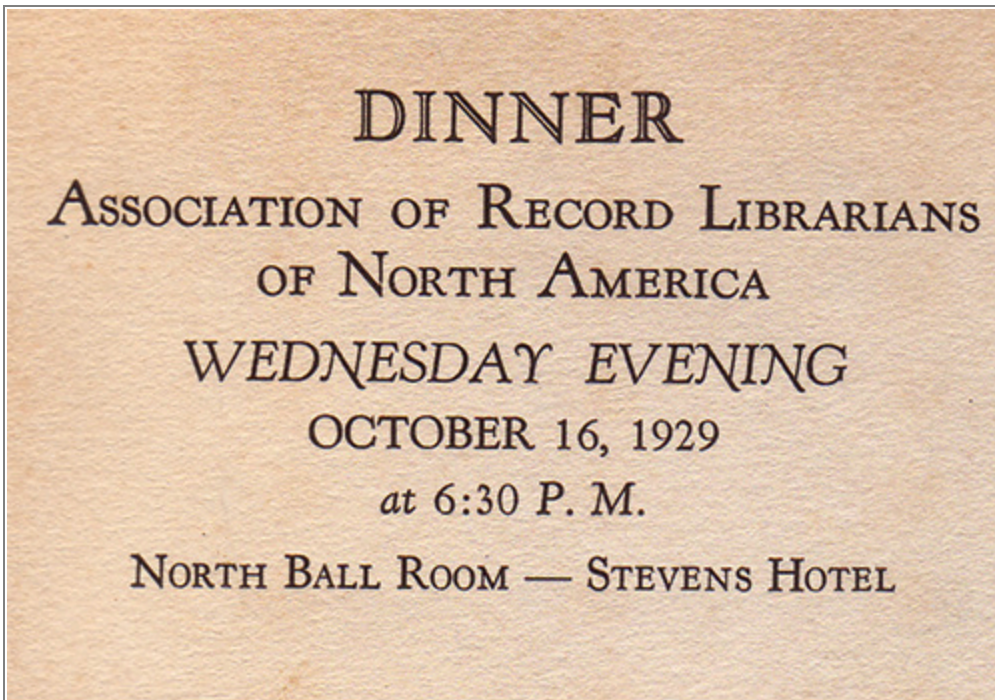
It was a warm day, Grace Whiting Myers remembered. The windows of the meeting room were open and a fire truck on the street below momentarily disrupted the proceedings. That's how AHIMA's first president recalled the birth of what would one day become AHIMA in October 1928.

Myers and the other founders of the association would be amazed by the AHIMA of 2013—following the association's numerous name changes, credential changes, and exponential membership growth now totaling 67,000 members. But they would not be surprised by the active role AHIMA and its members are playing in healthcare today.



AHIMA has been at the forefront of raising awareness about the importance of transformational changes, from DRGs through electronic health records and ICD-10-CM/PCS implementation. The association has advocated for stronger oversight on health information privacy, resulting in legal protections such as the privacy provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act. And AHIMA has provided its members and the industry with a robust body of knowledge for a rapidly growing field, from cutting-edge research to day-to-day information that HIM practitioners can use on the job.

Today, as AHIMA celebrates its 85th birthday, the association continues its journey toward its envisioned future of “health information where and when it’s needed.” AHIMA’s Strategic Plan encompasses initiatives such as transforming data into health intelligence and bolstering HIM education, information governance, and consumer outreach. “We believe accurate and timely health information will be the greatest asset healthcare organizations will have in the next decade,” says AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, FACHE, CAE, FAHIMA. “AHIMA will continue to serve as a lighthouse for professionals who are working to turn health information into healthcare intelligence.”



card from the first convention, held in Chicago.

Myers dinner and place



The 18th annual meeting of the American Association of Medical Record Librarians, which took place September 30–October 4, 1946 in Philadelphia, PA, featured the first House of Delegates. A total of 33 official delegates represented 20 states and the Hawaii Territory.



The Association of Record Librarians held a joint convention with the American Hospital Association in Detroit in September 1932. Pictured is an “attraction display” on medical records.

First association membership application.

**ASSOCIATION OF RECORD LIBRARIANS
OF NORTH AMERICA**

APPLICATION BLANK

Name in full (Miss or Mrs.)

Full Hospital address

Position at present occupied

Length of service, all together

Full or part-time worker

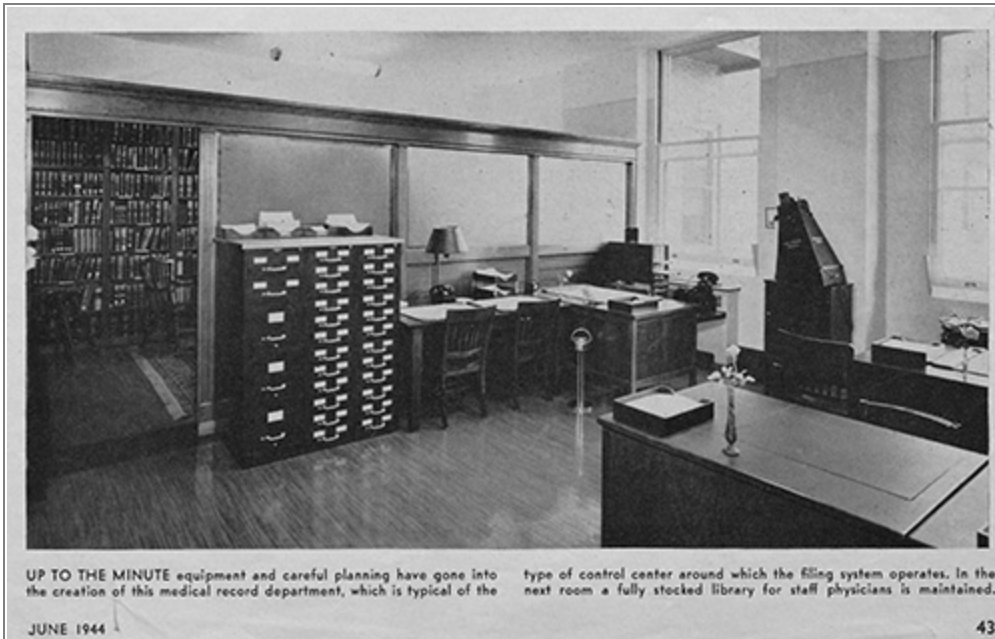
Other duties, if any

I hereby apply for membership

Signature:

Date

(This application should be accompanied by the membership fee of \$2.00)

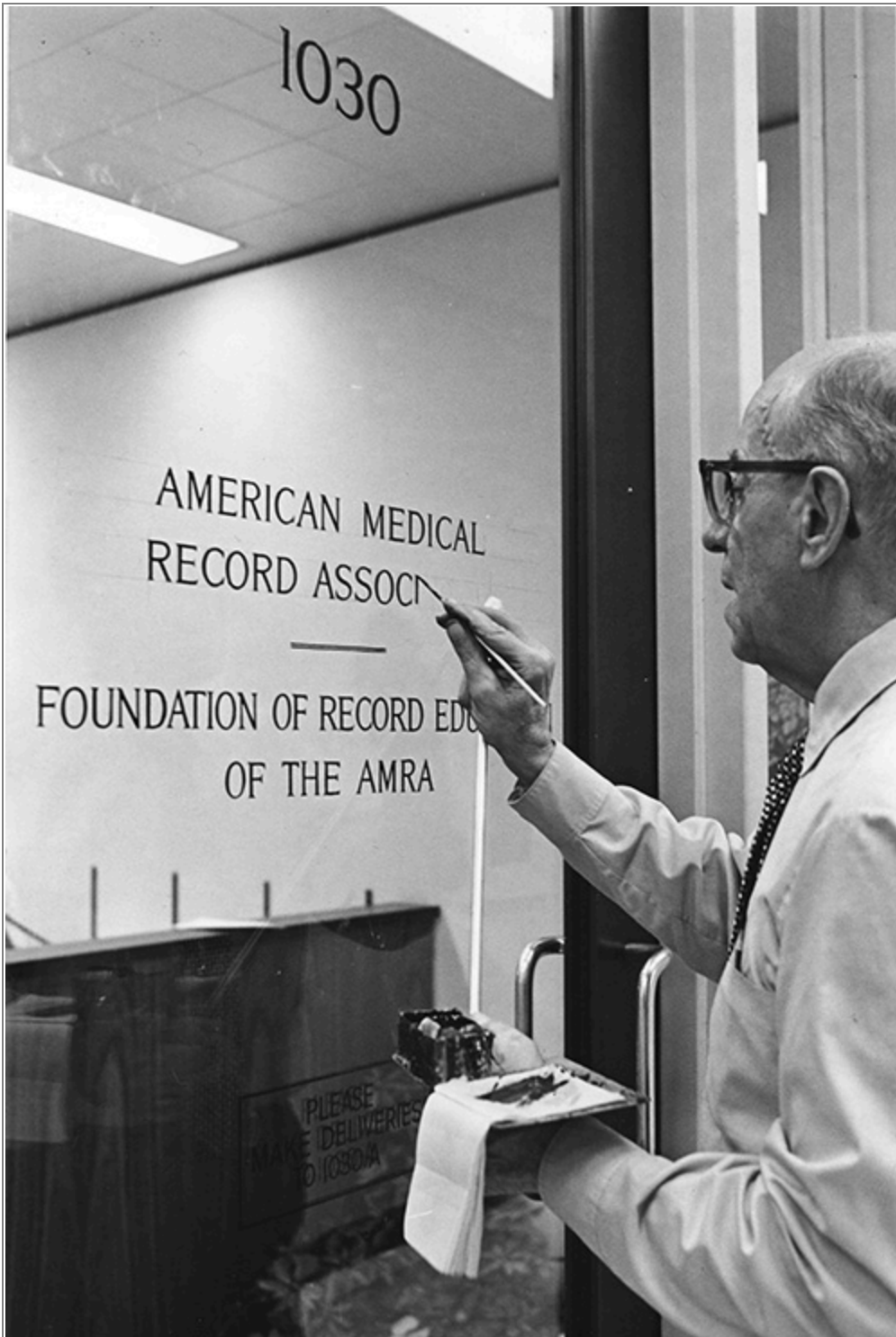


43 Picture of a typical medical

library and medical records department office, circa June 1944.



Of the more than 600 people who attended the 1958 convention in Boston, MA, several were nuns. Sessions like “Education Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow” and “Advances in Treatment of Cancer” were featured at the meeting.



The association's new name is engraved on its office entrance in 1970.



Incoming association President Ann Ball, RRL, receives the president's gavel from outgoing association President Sister Mary Eugene, RSM, RRL, during the 1961 convention.



An association member staffs a 1954 convention booth at the Catholic Hospital Association Meeting, held in Atlantic City, NJ.



A medical record professional works at Richmond Hospital, based in Richmond, CA, in 1973. The hospital was well ahead of its time, having developed its own in-house computing system.



A medical records

professional retrieves a file, circa 1970s.



An automatic microfiche retrieval system is used by master patient index clerks in 1977 at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center, based in San Diego, CA.



The Internet took center stage at the 2001 National Convention. Members first explored the Communities of Practice at this exhibit.

1910s

- **In 1912** Five women serving as record clerks at Boston Hospital meet at the Massachusetts General Hospital to study clinical records; They call themselves the “Club of Record Clerks”
- **In 1913** American College of Surgeons (ACSO) founded

1920s

- **In 1928** Association of Record Librarians of North America (ARLNA) is founded; Myers is elected as president
- *Bulletin of the Association of Record Librarians of North America* published; Executive Committee established; First annual meeting takes place in Chicago in 1929; Constitution and bylaws adopted

1930s

- Registered Record Librarian (RRL) credential established *Bulletin of the Association of Record Librarians of North America*, 1930
- *Bulletin, America Association of Medical Record Librarians* replaces the *Bulletin of the Association of Record Librarians of North America* after name change; Guidelines making local and state associations “affiliates” established; Guidelines for registration issued for nine record librarian schools



1940s

- *Journal of the American Association of Medical Record Librarians* replaces *Bulletin*; Central office established; Grace Whiting Myers Scholarship Award established
- House of Delegates established

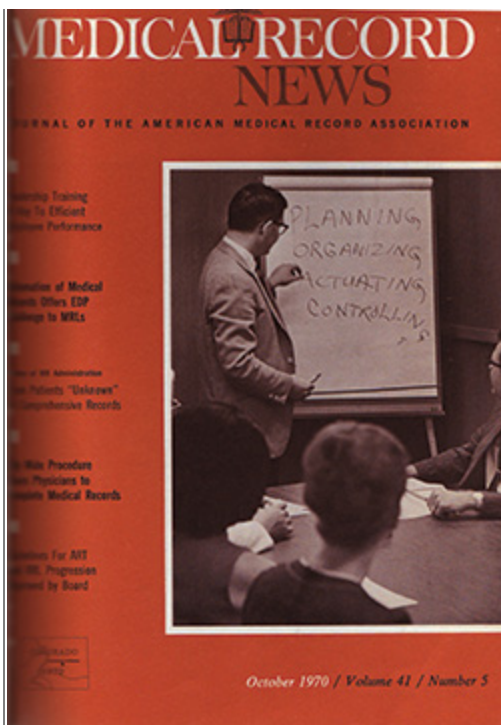
1950s

- State and local affiliates recognized as component state associations; First International Congress on Medical Records takes place in London
- AAMRL collaborates with FDA and American Society of Hospital Pharmacists to develop better methods of reporting adverse drug reactions; Participates in testing program of civil defense emergency unit

1960s

- Fourth International Congress on Medical Records meets in Chicago
- House of Delegates votes to change the association's name to the American Medical Record Association
- *Medical Record News* replaces *Journal of the American Association of Medical Record Librarians*
- **1960: Membership reaches nearly 4,500**

1970s



- *Medical Record News*, 1970
- Association changes name to the American Medical Record Association (AMRA) and its magazine name to *Journal of the American Medical Record Association*; Work begins with Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals
- AMRA assists members in implementation of ICD-9-CM
- **1978: Membership surpasses 23,000**

1980s

- Education and Registration Committee divided, forming the Council on Education and the Council on Accreditation
- The Mental Health Record Section and the Quality Assurance Section established at the National Convention.
- *Journal of AMRA* begins publishing monthly
- **1981: Membership 24,660**

1990s

- Name of association changed to American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) in 1991; magazine renamed *Journal of AHIMA*
- Joint Committee on Education organized; Vision 2006 articulated; US Congress passes the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- **1995: Membership 36,107**

2000s

- Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) credential replaces the Accredited Record Technician (ART) credential; Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA) credential replaces the Registered Record Administrator (RRA) credential
- In 2003, AHIMA celebrates 75th anniversary
- AHIMA launches myPHR.com, a consumer resource for answering medical record FAQs
- *Journal of AHIMA*, 2010
- **2012: Membership 65,097**

JOURNAL^{OF} AHIMA

JANUARY 2010



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For a look at *Journal of AHIMA* covers by decade from 1920 to 2010, visit <http://journal.ahima.org>.

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Driving the Power of Knowledge

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