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## Winter 2022 Newsletter

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## TRAIL Annual Meeting - Follow-up (Checking Local Inventory vs. TRAIL Needs)

Filling in gaps in the series for which TRAIL has already acquired and processed reports was a topic that received a lot of support at the 2021 TRAIL Annual Meeting. This topic showed up in three different contexts and received 18 total votes (nearly half of the Collections-related votes and over 10% of the total votes cast by meeting participants). The Collections Working Group has outlined a plan for addressing gap fills and is now working on a process and associated documentation. Those materials will be shared with the TRAIL community as soon as they are completed. The first call for gap fills should happen sometime in March 2022 if all goes according to plan.

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## TRAIL Annual Meeting - Save the Dates



May 24-26 (Tues-Thurs), whether in-person, hybrid, or all virtual. A decision on an in-person meeting with a hybrid option vs. an entirely virtual meeting will happen in the next couple of months. IF we can meet in person we will be at the University of Iowa and will also offer a virtual option.

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## Correction on Microcard Project Update from Autumn Newsletter

We need to correct information that appeared in the microcard project entry in the Fall 2021 newsletter. The text that appeared in the newsletter said:

*At this time 109,000 cards for about 3000 reports have been scanned and parsed so far.*

What it SHOULD have said is:

*At this time about 109,000 card IMAGES from about 3000 reports have been scanned and parsed so far.*

TRAIL only submitted about 51,000 microcards cards total (about 33,000 reports) for digitization, so these numbers refer to the number of images (109,000) from the first 3000 (of 51,000) reports, that had been both scanned AND parsed as of when Mark Phillips at the University of North Texas submitted that update.

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## Metrics Working Group Update - Data in Tableau Part 2

The Metrics Working Group consolidates data to help track TRAIL's impact. The working group has recently begun creating graphs to illustrate TRAIL's impact over time. Metrics Working

Group Member Marina Zhang created the following graphs. For all graphs, the TRAIL fiscal year runs from July to June. For example, FY 2022 began in July 2021 and will end in June 2022.

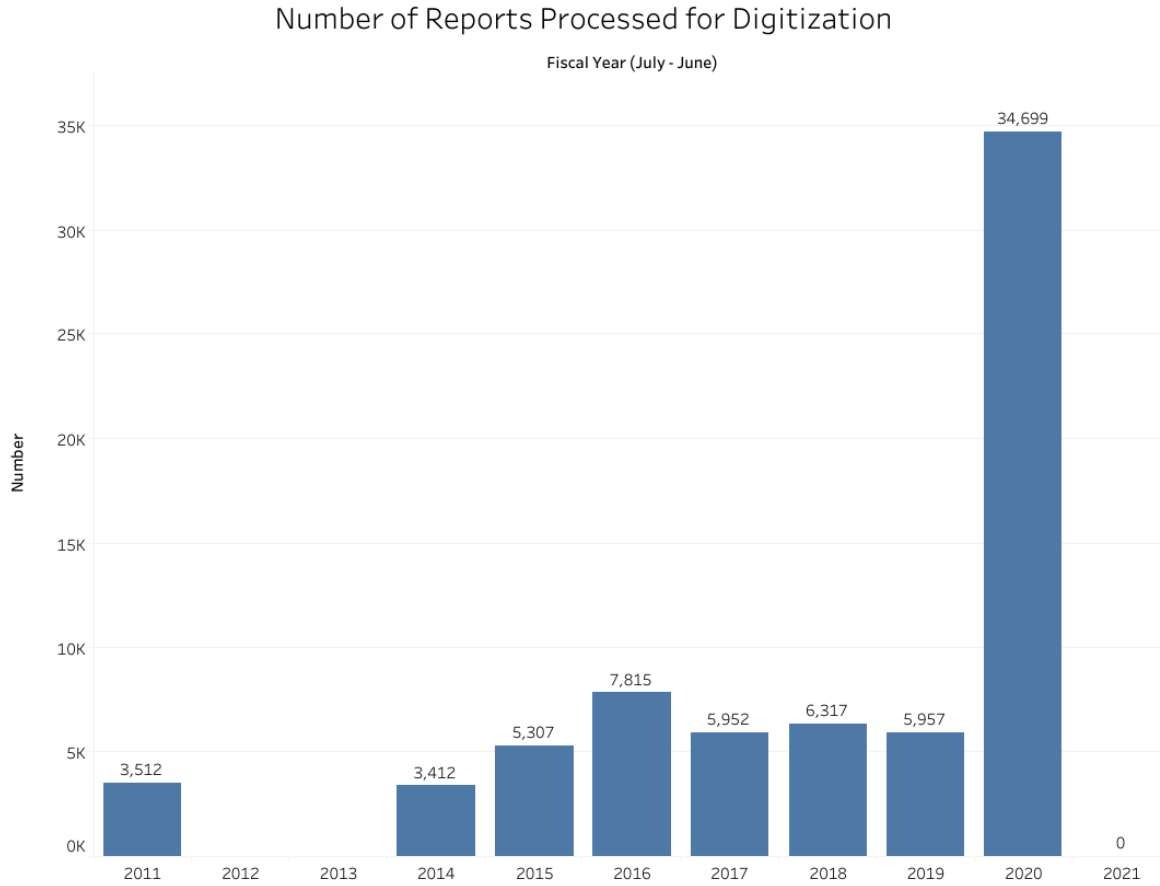


Figure 1 Number of Reports Processed for Digitization

The number of reports processed for digitization indicates the number of reports that Central (University of Arizona) reviewed, inventoried, and shipped for scanning at either HathiTrust (University of Michigan) or University of North Texas from fiscal year (FY) 2011 to 2021. FY 2020 numbers include the microcard project, which will be cataloged after digitization. Digitization in FY 2021 was impacted by closures due to the pandemic.

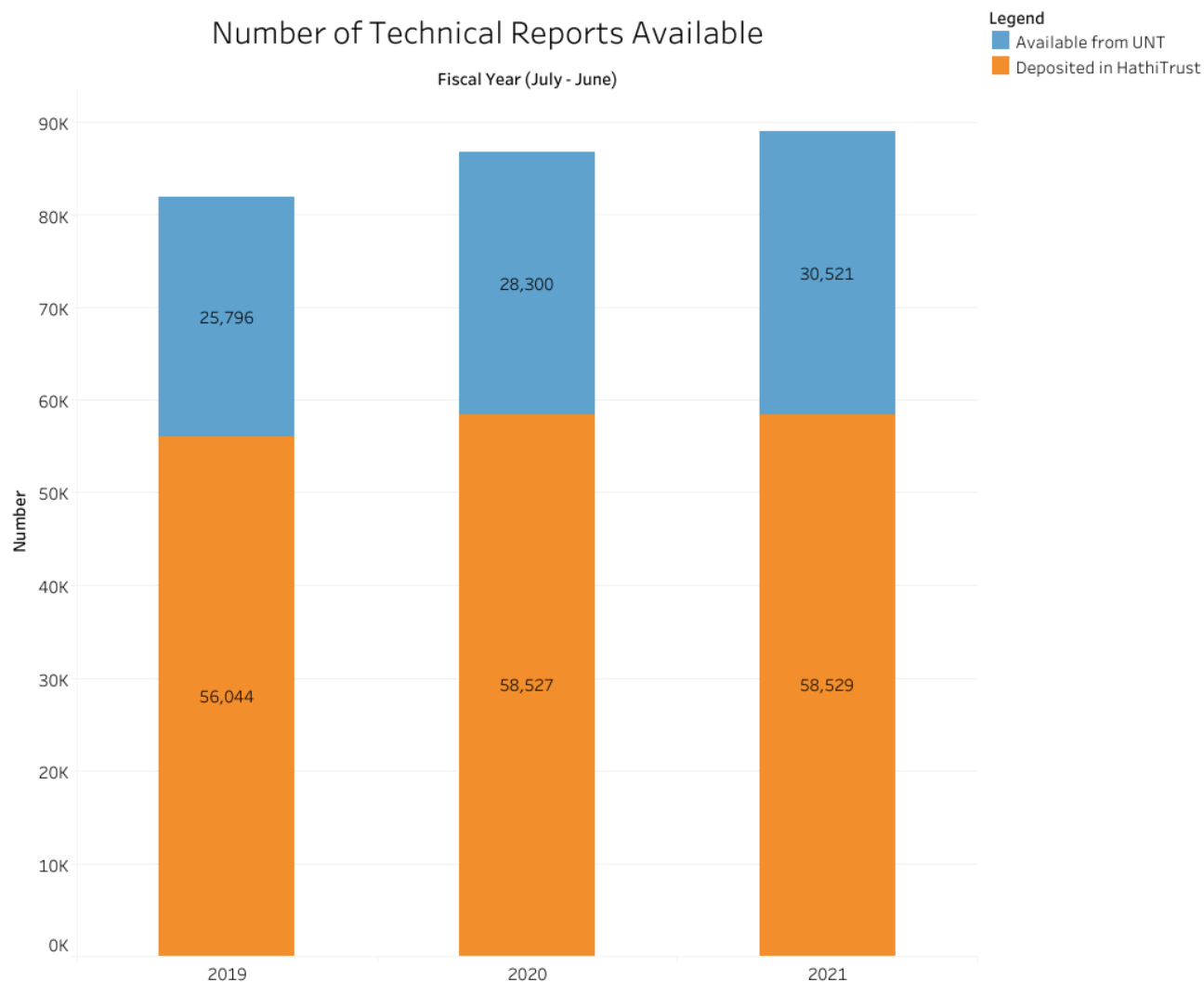


Figure 2 Number of Technical Reports Available

The number of technical reports available means the total number of volumes available from both HathiTrust and the University of North Texas (UNT) repositories at the end of the fiscal year. Note that there is a delay between reports processed and reports available due to digitization and description. Digitization in FY2020 and 2021 was impacted by pandemic-related closures.

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## Fall Meeting - Summary/Report Out

The December 8, 2021 TRAIL Member Information Update session was attended by 35 people. TRAIL Steering Committee members offered a brief overview of the organization and a rundown of current TRAIL activities, followed by a closer examination of two of the TRAIL Working Groups: Collections and Metrics. TRAIL Working Group members gave these

presentations that provided more detailed information about the current projects of the groups including the new series for digitization, gap fills, foreign copyright, featured UNT reports, and TRAIL data visualization. The Steering Committee intends to focus on different Working Groups in the 2022 TRAIL Information Update.

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## Processing Update

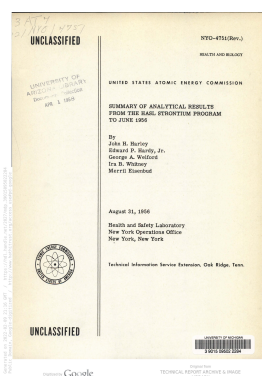
Central has been steadily processing mostly print material for eventual ingestion into HathiTrust. We have a full pallet of material waiting to be shipped to the Google scanning center. We had hoped to get the shipment prepped and out by the end of January but Omicron has put a couple of weeks delay into the timeline. We have noticed recently that content from one of the two pallets we shipped to Google while the scanning center was closed because of the pandemic is now starting to show up in the HathiTrust Digital Library, which is great to see.

We continue to fine tune our proposed distributed cataloging workflow by meeting with University of North Texas Digital Library staff just before the winter break to get some final questions answered. Next up is finalization of all documentation and a more formal call for volunteers.

TRAIL staff continue to work remotely, primarily, as Omicron runs its course.

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## Tech Report Highlight



Way back when TRAIL was still investigating how we were going to move forward, we worked with Linda Hall Library on a pilot project to develop a workflow for digitizing documents. Included in the process was quality control of the digitized documents. I evaluated the AEC-HASL (Atomic Energy Commission- Health and Safety Laboratory) documents. The HASL was created in 1947 as the Medical Division of the AEC and has undergone multiple name changes and worked under various federal agencies. It is now under the Department of Homeland Security where it was absorbed into its Science and Technology Directorate. See [EML History](#) for the full history and a great

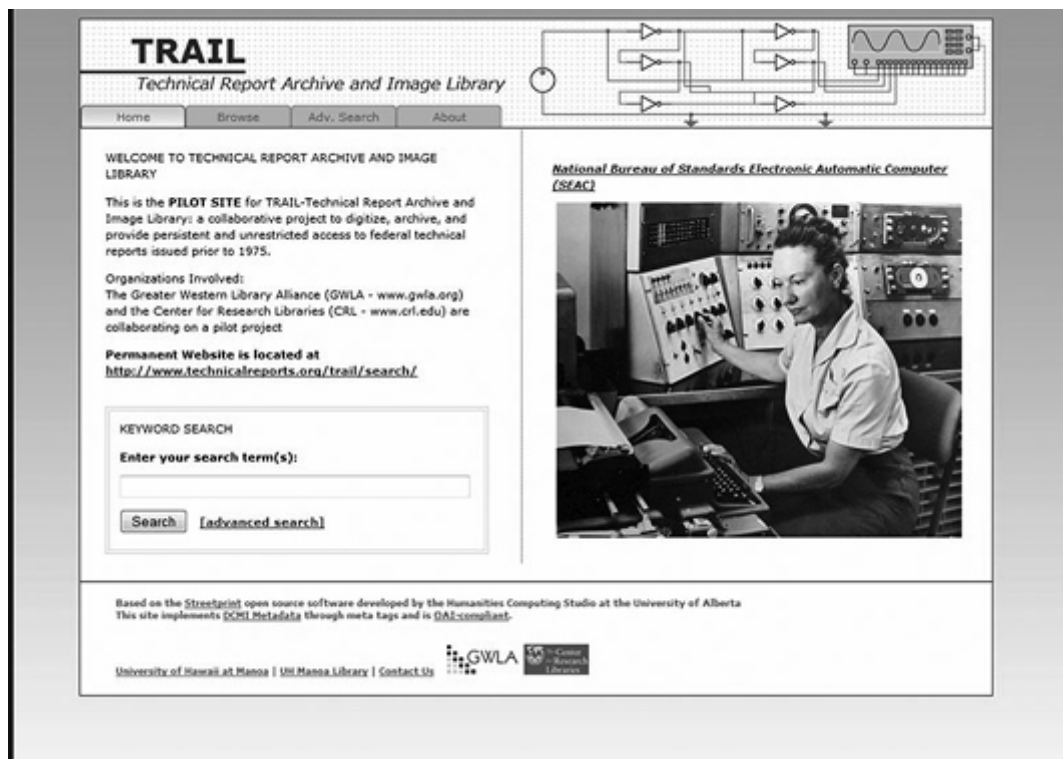
example of how one government unit evolved over time.

While evaluating the AEC-HASL documents I learned that the AEC had initiated a worldwide study (1958-76) of the occurrence of Strontium90 in the environment as a result of nuclear testing. The Fallout Program collected data from 85 sites in the northern hemisphere and 40 sites in the southern hemisphere. Quarterly summary reports were published and indicated that fallout was greater in the northern hemisphere. In addition, researchers wondered if Strontium90 was entering the food chain. The HASL produced numerous summaries of the data investigating Strontium90 in milk, wheat and wheat products, vegetables, fruits, fish, baby food and also tap water from various locations in the United States. At the time there was no information on the acceptable amount of exposure to Strontium90. According to [EPA](#), the Strontium90 is naturally occurring in the environment and today the levels in the environment resulting from fallout are very low. -  
Daureen Nesdill

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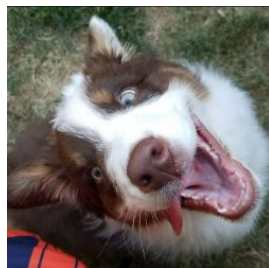
## Learn More About TRAIL History

A few years ago, in conjunction with our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, several TRAIL members wrote a history of TRAIL and included the workflow process of TRAIL. If you want to learn more about TRAIL, check out their article - <https://journals.ala.org/index.php/dtp/article/view/6070/7795>



The pilot TRAIL website from 2009 was created at the University of Hawaii-Manoa. The site no longer exists.

## Get to Know TRAIL Member: Mel DeSart



### Mel DeSart

**Head, Engineering Library and Head, Mathematics Research Library  
University of Washington**

**How are you involved in TRAIL?** I'm currently the Past Chair, having completed my second (non-consecutive) two-year term as Chair of TRAIL in May of 2021. I've served on the Steering Committee and on the Collections, Communications, and Membership working groups at various times, and am currently a member of all four. I'm the only one of the eight academic librarians involved in the original GWLA Federal Technical Reports Digitization Project (which began in 2006 and then morphed into TRAIL) who is still directly involved in the project.

**Favorite TRAIL moment?** One moment and one category of moments. The single moment was the end

of the very first two-day task force meeting at CRL in Chicago in 2006, when a very small group of librarians had hammered out the framework of a plan for how to digitize, catalog, and make openly available U.S. government technical reports. That plan resulted in a pilot project which became TRAIL, and we're still going strong 15 years later. As for the category of moments - each year's TRAIL annual meeting. Each of those meetings has been two full days of work to plan and move TRAIL forward - two very productive days, with lots of energy and great ideas, and with most people pretty spent by the end of the second day. But at the pre-COVID in-person meetings, there was also plenty of opportunity in the evenings to eat, drink (yes, librarians drink) and get to know more about the colleagues who you're spending two days with working on all things TRAIL.

**Favorite Technical Report?** "Airplane Speeds of the Future" <https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc56191/m1/1/> - by MIT Professor Edward P. Warner (National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics (NACA) Technical Memorandum no. 178), from 1923. Professor Warner postulates that the fastest commercial aircraft will fly at a maximum of about 325 mph and that racing aircraft might reach as high as 480 mph. Of course, this all assumes only propeller-driven aircraft with piston engines, not jet engines that, on military aircraft, can routinely break the sound barrier.

**What is your favorite part of your job?** Working directly with people to address their information needs, something that has been significantly reduced since the onset of COVID 19. I'm an extrovert, so I'm happiest and most fulfilled when I'm working with people, especially in-person instead of virtually. There are nuances in a person-to-person interaction that just aren't there in a virtual world.

**What is your "typical" work week like?** "Typical"? Short answer, no such thing. More useful answer – a little reference, instruction, collection



development/maintenance, branch library administration, a tiny bit of supervision (I've got great librarians working with me), and a LOT of meetings.

**What are you reading now?** Just started *The Abyss Beyond Dreams*, by Peter F. Hamilton, one of my favorite SF authors (although the guy doesn't know how to write a novel that's under 600 pages). It and the follow-up, *Night Without Stars*, are set in the same "Commonwealth" universe as six of Hamilton's other books, five of which I have already read.

**What are your favorite non-work activities?** Following a variety of college and professional sports, in particular baseball and the WNBA, focusing in particular on the St. Louis Cardinals and the Seattle Storm, reading more of the science fiction that I have accumulated over the last (almost) 50 years, and delighting in the now decades-long hunt for the perfect craft beer. Haven't found the perfect one yet, but I've found a few that are pretty close.



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*Feb 10, 2022*

**Web address:**  
[technicalreports.org](http://technicalreports.org)



