

Long-Distance Call: The 2020 Arolsen Archives Online Research Seminar

The Arolsen Archives are an international center on Nazi persecution with the world's most comprehensive archive on the victims and survivors of National Socialism. The institution's historical roots go back to the International Tracing Service (ITS), which in 1948 was established in Arolsen, Germany, with the task of clarifying the fates of missing Nazi victims. Today, the collection contains information on about 17.5 million people and belongs to UNESCO's Memory of the World.

Enabling historical research is a central part of the mission of the Arolsen Archives. More than 30 million documents on the Holocaust, Nazi concentration camps, forced labor, and the history of Displaced Persons (DPs) in the aftermath of World War II offer far-reaching potential for contributions to existing and innovative areas of research. The Arolsen Archives also keep over three million enquiry files documenting the search for individual Nazi victims.

Because a substantial number of these documents have been digitized and enriched with searchable metadata, they are increasingly used within digital humanities research, going beyond traditional biographical or geographical studies. While users can directly access a growing number of documents in an online archive provided on the website of the Arolsen Archives, this does not represent the collection in its entirety. Full access to the unrestricted portions of the Arolsen Archives is only possible through the software OuSArchiv that is normally only available in the reading room of the Arolsen Archives, as well as a limited number of partner organizations worldwide.

For this reason, and in order to facilitate academic exchange on current research into the history of Nazi persecution, the Arolsen Archives are, within the limitations of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, organizing an online seminar entitled *Long-Distance Call: The 2020 Arolsen Archives Online Research Seminar*. For this, we particularly welcome researchers who are in the early stages of their academic career, e.g. MA or PhD candidates. The event will take place via the software Zoom.

Following introductory talks on the history of the Arolsen Archives and their holdings, the main purpose of the seminar is to enable researchers to explore the archival holdings – through a “remote access” solution – from their home or workplace, without having to travel physically to Bad Arolsen. Working in small groups (“breakout rooms” on Zoom), participants will be able to save selected documents of interest free of charge. Staff from the Arolsen Archives will provide guidance in exploring the depths of the digital collections. Participants must use a device running Microsoft Windows in order to launch OuSArchiv remotely. Over the course of the event, there will also be room for joint discussions about the pros and cons of working with the documents in their current digital environment. Participants are encouraged to exchange ideas on methodological approaches in general as well as their individual research projects.

The event will take place via Zoom on October 6th and 7th 2020, with a time-window of 10 AM – 6 PM CEST (Central European Summer Time) on both days. If you are interested in joining the seminar, please be aware of the time zone. Dial-in information for Zoom will be provided in advance of the meeting.

Please note that the event language will be English.

Interested candidates are encouraged to send their application via e-mail to historical-research@arolsen-archives.org. Applications should include a brief academic CV and an overview of the project for which you intend to use the Arolsen Archives (1–2 pages in total).

The deadline for applications is August 31st 2020. Participants will be chosen and notified by September 4th 2020.

For more information about the Arolsen Archives, please refer to www.arolsen-archives.org. If you have any further questions, please contact us at historical-research@arolsen-archives.org.