

The MONTANA Archivist

WINTER 2006, VOL. 7 NO. 3

MONTANA SHRAB WANTS TO KNOW...

The Montana SHRAB is conducting a follow-up survey of repositories in the state caring for archival records. The short survey will gather information that will be used to create the Montana SHRAB Strategic Plan for 2007. Respondents will be asked to answer questions about their training priorities, collection management needs, emergency preparedness planning and goals for providing access to collections. The survey will be available December 1 to January 31. The survey can be found at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=602352991800>. Those without internet service can request a hard copy by contacting Jodie Foley at (406) 444-7482). The survey responses will be used to determine future workshop and scholarship offerings, so please help us help you!

COSA LAUNCHES SURVEY

As part of its **Closest to Home** project on local government archives, the Council of State Archivists is seeking input from a broad range of individuals about how to improve the preservation and use of these important records.

The Local Government Archives Task Force, which is overseeing the project, has developed an online questionnaire to encourage all interested parties to share insights and opinions on four issues of particular significance: **securing resources**, specifically funding, for preserving and managing local government records with continuing value; **developing training** in techniques and procedures for caring for records of continuing value **and delivering it** to local government officials; **addressing the impact of information technology** on the creation, preservation, and use of local government records; and **strengthening advocacy and raising awareness** about the importance of the local government records and of archival programs to care for them. The results of the questionnaire will be used by the project consultants to shape their reports and recommendations.

The questionnaire is easy to complete. **There are two versions of the questionnaire:** One is intended for those working in local governments and those who work directly with local government records (including elected and appointed

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Upcoming Events

Dec. 4-5, 2006, Society of American Archivists workshop Encoded Archival Description Denver

Jan. 19-22, 2007, American Library Association annual meeting, Seattle

March 29, 2007, Society of American Archivists workshop Basic Electronic Records, Seattle

April 25-27, 2007, Montana Library Association annual meeting, Helena

officials, as well as archivists and records managers who care for local government records). **The other is designed for those working outside of local government** but who have an interest in the preservation and use of these records. This category encompasses archivists or records managers in state government or university settings, other state government employees, researchers, genealogists, local historians, attorneys, land title specialists, and many others.

The questionnaire will be available September 12 - December 31, 2006. To access the questionnaire, go to <http://www.statearchivists.org/lga/questions/>

For more information on the **Closest to Home** project, visit the project's [home page](#) or contact Vicki Walch, CoSA Executive Director, at vwalch@statearchivists.org or 319-338-0248.



GRANT/SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Montana SHRAB Awards Scholarship!

The Montana SHRAB is pleased to announce that Eileen Wright, Reference Librarian and Archivist at Montana State University-Billings, is the recipient of a \$1000 scholarship to support her participation in the Preservation Management Institute of Rutgers University School of Communication. Ms. Wright will complete three one-week intensive training seminars over the next 12 months. Her training will provide skills she will need to complete a preservation and disaster preparedness plan for her facility. Congratulations Eileen!

The scholarship is made possible through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The Montana SHRAB offers scholarships of up to \$1,000 to attend training and/or educational workshops and courses on topics related to historical records. These funds can be used for any type of training or education as long as it is related to the management or preservation of historical records. The funds are available for local, statewide, regional, and national courses. For an application for these funds see insert or contact Jodie Foley at jofoley@mt.gov or (406) 444-7482.

IMLS Grants now available



Early Careers Development Program, Continuing Education— Grant project should seek to develop or enhance programs of continuing education and training in library and information science for librarians and library staff. Deadline: December 15, 2006. Grant Amount: \$50,000–\$1,000,000. Grant Period: Up to three years. Matching requirement: Fifty percent of total project costs; funds requested for student support are not subject to matching requirement.



National Leadership Grants— Projects should enable libraries, archives and museums to develop and test innovative solutions, and expand the boundaries within which cultural heritage institutions operate. Categories include **Advancing Learning Communities; Building Digital Resources and Research and Demonstration**. Deadline: February 1, 2007. Grant Amount: \$25,000–\$1,000,000 for museums; \$50,000–\$1,000,000 for libraries. Grant Period: Up to three years. Matching requirement: 1:1 for requests over \$250,000, except research projects. Cost sharing of at least one-third is encouraged for requests under \$250,000 and for research projects. Demonstration projects are subject to non-research matching provisions.



21st Century Museum Professionals Program

This program supports a variety of training and personnel development activities for museum staff members across all types of museums. Project design could include direct dissemination of information through workshops, seminars, and courses, or indirect communication through publications and Web sites. Projects should benefit multiple institutions or diverse constituencies. Deadline: March 15, 2007. Grant Amount: \$15,000 - \$500,000. Grant Period: Up to three years. Matching requirement: 1:1 for all funds requested from IMLS.

American Battlefield Protection Program Grants

The American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) leads a federal partnership initiative to help communities identify, assess, and protect our nation's historic battlefields. Grant applications for not-for-profit groups, interested community groups, and local, regional and state officials will be available on the National Park Service website (see address below). Grant applications for battlefield preservation, protection, planning, interpretation, education, and tourism will be accepted until the January 12, 2007 deadline. For more information or a copy of the grant application and program guidelines, call the Grants Manager, Kristen Stevens at 202-354-2037, or please visit the website for a downloadable version at: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/abpp/2007grants.htm>

FROM THE STACKS



A new feature to the *Montana Archivist*, this segment will highlight collections from the archival holdings of our readership. Institutions are invited to submit articles and/or collection descriptions for new acquisitions or collections of special interest. Submit to the Montana SHRAB c/o newsletter editor, Jodie Foley, 225 North Roberts, Helena MT, 59620 or via email at jofoley@mt.gov.

The inaugural collection, the **Tuesday Music Club Records**, was submitted by the Cascade County Historical Society Archives.

Mrs. Ophelia Kinsbury Forrest, a graduate of the Music Department at Howard Payne College, organized the Tuesday Morning Musical Club in November 1894 in Great Falls, Montana. This first meeting was held at Mrs. W. M. Atchinson's home, who was elected the first president. The club met every other Tuesday in member's homes to socialize, have lunch and listen to invited guests or one another perform. In 1906 when membership outgrew the homes they began meeting in Carnegie Hall in the Carnegie Library. The club presented many open concerts

and recitals as well as benefit concerts for individuals, hospitals, YWCA, Red Cross and other charities.

The more than 70 members included performers in voice, piano, violin, dance, dramatic reading and readers. In 1940 the club presented a Steinway Concert Grand Piano to the city of Great Falls to be used on the stage of the Civic Center Auditorium. In 1949 the club began awarding scholarships to high school musicians. In 1967 a separate scholarship fund was established and in 1988 the money was invested to be used for scholarships. As other community musical organizations grew the club membership changed to fewer performers and more supporters. Membership in 1994 was 47. By 2000 membership stood at 20 and new members were becoming harder to attract. The Tuesday Music Club disbanded in 2001 after 106 years of active service. According to the State Federation of Music Clubs the Great Falls group was the oldest club in Montana and the second oldest group of its kind in the nation.

This collection consists of financial records (1923-2001), minutes (1901-1999); subject files for the club centennial and scholarship endowment fund; newsletters (1992-1993); yearbooks (1939-1998); guest books (1967-2001); clippings; and scrapbooks (1894-1987).



ARCHIVAL MUSING

Another new segment to the Montana Archivist, this feature will focus on topics of interest to the archival profession as expressed through articles, blogs, listservs, or any other fiery missives. They may be excerpts from others writings or your very own thoughtful expressions. Just submit to the newsletter editor at jofoley@mt.gov. Our first submission was sent in by Kim Allen Scott, Special Collections Librarian at MSU-Bozeman's Renne Library, who tackles the thorny issues surrounding the ever increasing use of the internet to promote and provide access to archival collections:

Caught in a Web

ADVERTISING: *to call public attention to; especially by emphasizing desirable qualities so as to arouse a desire to buy or patronize...*

We have all heard it said that the World Wide Web is mostly advertising. You are only a mouse click away from millions of web pages describing everything from home repair techniques to Britney Spears' wardrobe, and almost all of them have some sort of flashing banner begging you to click to another site with your checkbook handy. We archivists, sitting in our ivory towers of information storage, usually consider ourselves above this crass commercialism. After all, we know that our use of the web is higher, purer, nobler, and so much more altruistic than the book reviews on Amazon.com. But are we really? If you think about it, much of what archives and libraries are doing on the web differs very little from the dotcom snake oil hawking that predominates the internet.

Consider for a moment our library brethren. From your laptop anyplace in the world, you can virtually visit most libraries' OPAC and find out that the book you want to read is, indeed, at that library (even though you are not). The OPAC has "called public attention to the book by emphasizing its desirable qualities so as to arouse a desire to buy or patronize," but it does not actually deliver you the goods unless you pony up for interlibrary loan services. It really gets interesting when the library OPAC catalogs "e-journals" but doesn't allow the general public to link to the URL. Usually those links are reserved for people who have an affiliation with the library, like university students who have

registered for the service. The point is that somebody has to pay for that subscription because no commercial publisher in his right mind is going to charge for a magazine on the news stand and then just and then just give it away on a TV screen.

Enough of the library dissing, let's consider our own profession. Are we not in some ways lavishing money on internet advertising? Look at all the big bucks granting agencies are dealing out to archives if they promise to implement "Encoded Archival Description." This souped-up Luke Skywalker style finding aid standard can be seen as just another format for the advertisement of information that can be found within a given collection, not the information itself. What about all that money we are throwing at our scanners and scanning projects? Isn't that providing access rather than advertising? I would say no because unless you are prepared to scan ENTIRE COLLECTIONS, you are still just advertising. Our profession recognizes that we have to batch our information bearing material, that we must describe it in groups, and that we cannot possibly catalog every document within a given collection. Yet the gurus of scanning, with their Byzantine requirements for the "metadata" that must accompany every individual image, are requiring exactly that: item level description. Since we can't possibly do it all, we settle for second best: scan some choice tidbits and advertise.

Do I advocate giving up on the web? Heavens no! I like to surf as much as any gnarly information seeker. I just say that we ought to recognize that our professional responsibilities of appraisal, arrangement, description, preservation, and access are all pretty much the same now as they were before Al Gore invented the Internet. We

ought to all study those responsibilities before writing another grant to scan our various collections of matchbook covers. Maybe we ought to ask our users what they would like to see up on the screen, and when we hear them say “everything!” we ought to seriously consider the implications of advertising versus access.

Comments about—or rebuttals to—this essay can be sent to the editor for inclusion in the next newsletter.

NEW RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENT: DAVID THOMPSON CONFERENCE

The Montana Historical Society will be co-hosting the 2007 David Thompson Bicentennials Conference in Helena titled ***Beyond Borders and Boundaries*** June 15-16, 2007. The conference will feature a one day workshop on June 15 aimed at educators from across the region—Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Canada. Jack Nisbet, author of *The Mapmaker’s Eye: David Thompson on the Columbia Plateau*, will discuss the role of Indian women in the fur trade as well as how to bring David Thompson and the history of the fur trade into the classroom during the morning session. For the afternoon session, the staff of the Montana Historical Society will provide instruction on accessing sources at the Montana Historical Society from their online catalogs, curriculum guides, and education footlockers. Day two, June 16, will be a traditional conference format with concurrent sessions discussing a variety of topics related to David Thompson and the North American fur trade. Online registration for *Beyond Borders and Boundaries* will be available through the Montana Historical Society website <http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org/> in February 2007. For more information contact Rich Aarstad at either raarstad@mt.gov or (406) 444-6779.

New publications available from SAA:

 ***Photographs: Archival Care and Management***: An essential tool for custodians of photographs in archives, libraries, historical societies, and similar repositories who manage photographic materials. This authoritative guide provides pragmatic techniques for each aspect of managing collections of images—from appraisal and accessioning through arrangement, description, and research use.

 ***Architectural Records: Managing Design and Construction Records***: In addition to addressing preservation issues, this resource helps archivists, curators, librarians and researchers understand how to assess the value of architectural records. Contents include: brief history of Western architectural practice; and recommendations on best practices for appraisal, arrangement, and description

 ***Understanding Archives and Manuscripts***: This thoroughly updated version of the 1990 edition is not only the best short introduction to archives for students, new archivists, and anyone interested in archiving, but also provides the experienced archivist an invaluable summary analysis of the field’s burgeoning literature and increasingly complex issues.



WEBSITES, BLOGS AND WIKIS...OH MY!



Below are a few websites and online resources that you might want to check out. There is such a wealth of information on the web now that it is often overwhelming. Sharing favorite sites across the profession is one way to cut through the web! Please send in your favorites and I will post them in the next newsletter.



Collaborative Digitization Project Website:

This site is especially helpful for those setting up digitization projects, but is really useful for folks specifically working with audio files. See Digital Audio Best Practices at http://www.cdpheritage.org/digital/audio/documents/CDPDABP_1-2.pdf



Digitization 101: According to its creator, Jill Hurst-Wahl, this Blog is THE PLACE for staying up-to-date on issues, topics, and lessons learned surrounding the creation, management, marketing and preservation of digital assets. Find it at <http://hurstassociates.blogspot.com/>



The SAA website has many useful pages to peruse including: <http://www.archivists.org/publications/free.asp> for free publications; and to <http://www.archivists.org/listservs/index.asp> for list serves serving the profession at large, and specializations including motion picture archivists, educators, and students.



Richard Cox, Professor in Library and Information Science at the University of Pittsburgh, recently created his own Blog where he ruminates on all things archival. See <http://readingarchives.blogspot.com/>



The American History Association is preparing a wiki for its readership. See <http://blog.historians.org/resources/31/archives-wiki-part-i-a-proposal>. What's a wiki? A **wiki** is a type of Web site that allows visitors to easily add, remove, and otherwise edit and change some available content, sometimes without the need for registration. This ease of interaction and operation makes a wiki an effective tool for collaborative authoring.



**Publications
Still
Available**

PUBLICATIONS STILL AVAILABLE

Copies of the Montana SHRAB'S manual, *Preferred Practices for Historical Repositories* are still available, free of charge. This publication is a checklist and self-assessment manual and provides information on a wide variety of management and preservation topics related to archives and museums. Copies are available from Jodie Foley at (406) 444-7482 or jofoley@mt.gov. Additional copies of the SHRABs other publications, including *So You Have a Box of Papers...* and the quarterly newsletter are also available.



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