Teaching Them How to Fish: Supporting Digital Collection
Building Through Regional Partnerships

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WMU ScholarWorks Citation
Swierenga, Marianne; Carlson, Sharon; and Bocko, Amy, "Teaching Them How to Fish: Supporting Digital Collection Building Through Regional Partnerships" (2021). University Libraries Faculty & Staff Presentations. 26.
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Teaching Them How to Fish: Supporting Digital Collection Building Through Regional Partnerships

Amy Bocko, Marianne Swierenga, & Sharon Carlson
Western Michigan University Libraries
Overview

- (Digital) age old “problem” how do small organizations enter the digital collection space?
- Creating a “solution”
- Project-set up and launching the pilot
- COVID-19, or when a pandemic ruins your plans
- Making it work, remotely
- End product, with pictures!
- Lessons learned
- Next steps
Digital Projects at WMU

- Strong history in digitization projects
  - Equipment
  - Technical and descriptive expertise

- Technical infrastructure
  - Digital collection platforms
  - Sub-Hub of the Michigan Service Hub of the Digital Public Library of America
  - Michigan Digital Preservation Network (MDPN)
Archives and Regional History at WMU

- Zhang Legacy Collections Center, home to the University Archives and the Regional History Collections
  - Mission to collect, preserve, and make available the history of Southwest Michigan
  - Rich collection to draw from for digitization projects
  - Subject specialists with local history knowledge
  - Strong community outreach
  - Student employees and interns gain hands-on education
“The Problem”

Small and under-resourced institutions desire to enhance the reach and access of their unique archival collections

Barriers to digital collection building

- Funding for scanning equipment
- Stable technical infrastructure and digital collection platforms
- Expertise in digitization and metadata creation
- Backlog of un- or under-processed/undescribed materials
- Lean staffing

Institutional Strengths

- Unique materials from underrepresented communities and geographical regions
- Enthusiasm
- Volunteers with regional & institutional knowledge
WMU partners with local orgs and removes barriers to successful digitization projects.

Form Partnerships

Investigate Service Model Feasibility
Based on output and feedback from pilot, investigate establishing digitization services.

Develop Pilot Project & Seek Grant Funding
Create detailed project proposal → funded by LSTA Collaborative Services Grant via Library of Michigan.

Digitize hidden SW MI collections to be shared via Michigan Memories → DPLA.

Create Harvestable Digital Collections

Regional Digitization Assistance Survey
Administer survey to gauge interest in WMU offering regional digitization assistance.
Gilmore Car Museum

Hickory Corners, MI
gilmorecarmuseum.org

- Started by businessman and car enthusiast Donald S. Gilmore and his wife Genevieve in 1966
- North America’s largest automobile museum
- Research Library and Archival Facility
- No digitized collections, or capacity to create them
- Previous connection through consultations
Established in 1973 by the grassroots efforts of local residents
Serves the mostly rural Richland Township region
Active genealogy and public history groups
Local History Room with locally-significant materials
No digitized collections, but enthused to begin them
Defining the Scope
(otherwise known as “no, we won’t digitize everything in this room”)
Developing the Pilot

- Create suite of flexible, high-quality equipment for mobile digitization.
- Develop metadata profile based on the partners needs that will work with WMU platforms.
- Hire a project assistant to provide digitization training and on-site guidance.
- Develop and administer survey gauging interest in regional digitization services.

Community Digitization Through Regional Partnerships

A Collaborative Model for Digital Collection Building

LSTA Collaborative Library Services Grant Recipient 2019
Mobile Digitization & Guidelines

**Equipment Detail/Budget**

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<tr>
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<th>B</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>EOS 6D Mark II</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>LED Light Kit</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Color Passport</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Copystand</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Non-reflective glass</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Tripod</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tripod head</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Memory Cards</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cords</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Canon AC adaptor</td>
<td>144</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Background support</td>
<td>105</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Mat boards</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Lens Protector filter</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Macbook Pro (2)</td>
<td>3300</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Epson 12000XL</td>
<td>3430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Epson V800</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Camera case</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total:</strong> 11160</td>
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</table>

**Digitization Guidelines**

Image/PDF Creation Guidelines for Archival Collections

Updated 5/23/21 by Amy Block

For each image, there will be three corresponding files: An archival master TIFF, an edited service TIFF and a jpeg which we will ingest into our delivery systems. For multi-page archival documents, we will use the jpeg to generate a PDF for delivery and display.

**Archival TIFF**

This image should be at least 300 dpi, and 3000-4000 pixels on the longest side. (For oversized negatives, scan at 800 dpi). No edits will be made to this image, and it should be differentiated from the service file by adding “a” at the end of the extension (i.e. a01234). Please make sure you save a copy before you mask any edits. This file will serve as an archival version, and can be accessed to re-edit if it is necessary in the future. This file can range from 25-60MB.

**Service TIFF**

All service files will be standardized to 300 dpi, and 3000 pixels. This uniform size will create high quality derivative jigs for classroom and research purposes. All image editing takes place within the service file. The overall size of the service file will be around 20MB. Do not add an “a” to the file extension.

**JPEG**

For the archival photo collection, we are not relating the image, but rather saving the service file as a jpeg. We’ll ingest the high res jpeg into our delivery systems to ensure a good user experience and save storage space.

Create PDF

Using the jigs, we will generate a PDF in Photoshop of multi-page archival documents. We’ll save these alongside the independent images:

1. Open all images for the document in Photoshop.
2. Go to File > Automate > “PDF Presentation”
4. Name the files and save. The Save Adobe PDF window will pop up. Unless it’s a very large number of pages, we shouldn’t have to compress the files. Click Save as PDF. Click OK.
Collaborative Metadata

- Developing the Metadata Profile
  - Dublin Core
  - DPLA Metadata Application Profile (MAP)
  - Rights Statements
- Creating documentation
  - Metadata guidelines
  - Template spreadsheet
  - Samples
- Train-the-trainer model
  - Librarian -> Project Assistant -> Volunteers

### Metadata Guidelines

**Data entry guidelines:** Field Name will correspond to a heading in your spreadsheet. Do not format text (italic, bold, etc.); each. You may repeat the fields Subject, Contributor, and Location by adding a hashtag and number (example: Subject1, Subject2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIELD NAME</th>
<th>DC MAP</th>
<th>REQUIRED</th>
<th>FIELD DESCRIPTION</th>
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<td>TITLE</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Brief, descriptive name given to the resource</td>
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<tr>
<td>CREATOR</td>
<td>Creator</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Entity primarily responsible for the creation of the resource (photographer, author)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUBJECT</td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Person pictured or topic of the resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESCRIPTION</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Textual description of the content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUBLISHER</td>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Entity responsible for making the resource available in its present form (WMU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTRIBUTOR</td>
<td>Contributor</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Other person(s) or organization(s) who have made significant contributions to the resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATE</td>
<td>Date - Created</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Date resource was created (photograph taken); Format like 1964-09-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPE</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Resource type (Image or Text)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORMAT</td>
<td>Format</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>ImageMHz - image/ogg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDENTIFIER</td>
<td>Identifier</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Number used to uniquely identify the resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOURCE</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>What was the image digitized from: physical details, archival collection, institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Language of a textual resource</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Location (name of place, city, state) of place pictured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME PERIOD</td>
<td>Coverage - Temporal</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Estimated time period of creation if no date given. If a decade is known = 1940 - 1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIGHTS</td>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>*A link (URL only) to a copyright notice, a rights-management statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIGHTS accessRights</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Local rights statement if needed. Cannot contradict Rights Statement.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIGHTS HOLDER</td>
<td>RightsHolder</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Person or organization who holds rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>COLLECTION NAME</td>
<td>Relation - IsPartOf</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Name given to digital collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>FILE NAME</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>File name with extension</td>
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<tr>
<td>DATE DIGITAL</td>
<td>Date - Available</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Year when the resource was digitized</td>
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</table>

*Rights Statements*

We will be using RightsStatements.org for standardized rights statements and communicate any copyright for these digital objects. Three main statements:

In Copyright: [RightsStatements.org](http://rightsstatements.org/vocab/InC/1.0/)
No Copyright - United States: [RightsStatements.org](http://rightsstatements.org/vocab/NoC-US/1.0/)
Copyright Undetermined: [RightsStatements.org](http://rightsstatements.org/vocab/UND/1.0/)
Selection Process

Selection Criteria: *Should you, May you, Can you?*

- Should you? : content value, description, rare/fragile/unique, audience
- May you? : copyright, permissions, privacy
- Can you? : equipment, time, platform considerations

Pilot Project Criteria

- Equipment best for photographs, single sheets
- Platform requirements/restrictions
- DPLA’s collection development guidelines
- Specified time period for completion
Project Management

Set realistic goals
Establish workflow
Assign tasks
Break it down to manageable steps
Watch for scope creep
When a Pandemic Ruins Your Plans

- Priorities change
- Flexibility is required
- Volunteer labor is susceptible
- File management is important - *Gather ye data while ye may*
- Be prepared to find new ways to get the work done
- Keep open communication with your granting agency
Pandemic Pivots

- What had been digitized previously is what we had to work with
- WMU staff helped to edit raw scans
- Metadata created by WMU faculty while working remotely
The Survey

- Focused on smaller libraries and historical societies in Southwest Michigan
- General questions about mission, staffing, collections, and past digital projects
- Students in the Public History program were going to do site visits
- COVID-19 impacted follow-up
Selected Survey Questions

What are your greatest hurdles in digitizing collections? (See choices below) (1=greatest obstacle to 3=not an obstacle) You may also list out any other factors.

Staff to Digitize
- [ ] 1 Greatest Obstacle
- [ ] 2 Moderate Obstacle
- [ ] 3 Not an Obstacle

Equipment
- [ ] 1 Greatest Obstacle
- [ ] 2 Moderate Obstacle
- [ ] 3 Not an Obstacle

Space to Digitize
- [ ] 1 Greatest Obstacle
- [ ] 2 Moderate Obstacle
- [ ] 3 Not an Obstacle

Description/Metadata of Digitized Materials
- [ ] 1 Greatest Obstacle
- [ ] 2 Moderate Obstacle
- [ ] 3 Not an Obstacle

Copyright Restrictions
- [ ] 1 Greatest Obstacle
- [ ] 2 Moderate Obstacle
- [ ] 3 Not an Obstacle
Survey Results

- 19% response rate - 12 institutions
- Staffing, equipment, digital storage were the primary concerns
- 6 of the 12 institutions responding wanted to partner with WMU
Lessons Learned

- Manage expectations up front - we can’t digitize *everything*, but we can digitize something high-impact, and exciting to the community.
- Communicate often, openly and clearly.
- Document, document, document: create easy to follow documentation and guidelines.
- To “Train the Trainer”, or not to “Train the Trainer”?
End Products

Gilmore Car Museum, Walt Disney Collection
- 594 images of Walt Disney’s visit to Southwest Michigan, Sept. 1964

Richland Community Library, Local History Collection
- 89 digitized photographs from late 1800s, early 1900s
- Images featuring Richland area locations and people

Accessible
- Hosted online through WMU’s Luna platform
- Harvested into DPLA and Michigan Memories
Donald Gilmore and Walt Disney - A Fortuitous Friendship

- Upjohn Pharmacy
- Upjohn’s Triangle
- Gilmore Car Museum collaboration expanded on holdings at WMU
Yorkville Mill under construction

The building under construction, workers in the doors. The hamlet of Yorkville lied in the western side of Ross Township, near Gull Lake, Michigan.

Partner: Michigan Service Hub
Contributing Institution: Western Michigan University, Libraries
Publisher: Western Michigan University
Subjects: Yorkville (Mich.), Flour mills
Location: Ross (Mich.: Township)
Type: image

13 results for Yorkville Michigan

Yorkville, dirt road with fence
Two men stand in a dirt road. There looks to be a stone arch bridge in the distance.
View Full Item in Western Michigan University, Libraries

Yorkville, the Stone Arch Bridge
A road runs up and over a stone arch bridge
View Full Item in Western Michigan University, Libraries

Yorkville, bridge with car stopped
View Full Item in Western Michigan University, Libraries

Yorkville, Dr. Price's Foods, Price Cereal Products
Formerly Yorkville Mill. Dr. Price's Cereal Co. closed in 1907. The hamlet of Yorkville lied in the western side of Ross Township, near Gull Lake, Michigan.
Where do we go from here?

- Writing a case study.
- Continue collection building with RCL.
- Follow up with survey responses.
- Evaluate options for a deployable service model.
- Pursue additional grant funding.
Yes, Outreach and Community Engagement are Still Important

“The University Libraries empowers its community to discover, explore, and shape the information universe.”

~WMU Libraries Mission, strategic plan
Links

Richland Community Library Local History Collection
https://luna.library.wmich.edu/luna/servlet/wmich~8~8

Gilmore Car Museum, Walt Disney Collection
https://luna.library.wmich.edu/luna/servlet/wmich~6~6

Library of Michigan / LSTA Collaborative Library Services Grant Program
www.Michigan.gov/LSTA
Thank You

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Marianne Swierenga, Cataloging and Metadata Librarian, 
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