

# OLAQ

---

Volume 24 , Number 4 *Digital Repositories and Data Harvests* | Pages 1 - 54

---

8-1-2019

## Digital Repositories and Data Harvests

---

(2019). Digital Repositories and Data Harvests. *OLA Quarterly*, 24(4), 1-54. <https://doi.org/10.7710/1093-7374.24.04>

© 2019 by the author(s).

*OLA Quarterly* is an official publication of the Oregon Library Association | ISSN 1093-7374

# OLA Quarterly



## Digital Repositories and Data Harvests

Winter 2018

Vol 24 • No 4

# OLAQ

OLA Quarterly  
Winter 2018  
Vol 24 • No 4

Oregon Library Association  
<http://www.olaweb.org>  
ISSN 1093-7374

The OLA Quarterly is an official publication of the Oregon Library Association. Please refer questions and input regarding the Quarterly to:

*OLA Quarterly Editor-in-Chief:*  
Charles Wood  
[wuchakewu@gmail.com](mailto:wuchakewu@gmail.com)

*Graphic Production:*  
Julie Weiss  
Tobias Weiss Design  
[julie@tobiasweissdesign.com](mailto:julie@tobiasweissdesign.com)  
[www.tobiasweissdesign.com](http://www.tobiasweissdesign.com)



*The views expressed in this issue do not necessarily represent the views of the Oregon Library Association.*

**Upcoming  
Issue**

**Spring 2019**

*The Future Organization  
of Things*



## Digital Repositories and Data Harvests

COVER PHOTO:

Julia E. Janson, Special Collections Research Assistant at Southern Oregon University.  
Photo by Maureen Flanagan Battistella.

# From the Guest Editor



*Data transfer, circa 1951: Moving books from Churchill Hall to the new library in Central Hall at Southern Oregon College of Education, now Southern Oregon University. Photo courtesy of the Southern Oregon Digital Archives at Southern Oregon University.*

MAUREEN FLANAGAN BATTISTELLA

A librarian by training and inclination, Maureen now has a faculty appointment as Assistant Professor Associate in the Sociology and Anthropology program at Southern Oregon University. Her research interests include heritage preservation, agricultural succession and land use planning. She is the curator of the Stories of Southern Oregon project published on YouTube and in the Southern Oregon Digital Archives at Southern Oregon University. The Stories project has been funded by the Oregon Heritage Commission, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and through a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Competitive Grant from the Oregon State Library.

Today it's hard to imagine life without a smartphone, but broadcast television, travel to the moon, MARC records, personal computers, email, the Internet, online library catalogs, cell phones, video on demand, virtual reality, and digital archive collections all came about in one human generation.

Throughout that generation of disruptive and innovative technologies, librarians have served the public good by providing the conceptual skills to organize and describe information and provide or facilitate access to it. Moreover, libraries, through cooperatives and information sharing agreements, have made possible the construction of massive data systems that serve our nation's needs with respect to heritage content, contemporary awareness and future planning.

And that's the foundation of this special issue of the *OLA Quarterly* on digital repositories and data harvests. In this issue, experts from Oregon's libraries, Larry Landis (OSU), Mark Dahl and Zachariah Selley (Lewis & Clark), Sarah Seymore (UO), Becca Evans (SOU), Julia Simic (UO) and Ryan Wick (OSU), Beth Dehn (Oregon Heritage Commission), and Ross Fuqua and Arlene Weible (Oregon State Library) describe their work to develop important collections that have been or will be harvested and shared broadly with users throughout the world. These aren't siloed collections that live solely in a local database or on one institution's server. These are world-class collections, shared globally to enrich human existence.

OLAQ

As an introduction, I'd like to briefly recall the not-too-distant-past that has made it possible for us to share the important content we have worked so hard to preserve and document.

ARPANet, the digital network infrastructure that was to become the Internet was first established in 1969 by the U.S. Advanced Research Projects Agency allowing scientists in four universities to share data. TCP/IP, a system of machine addressing, message packaging and routing was deployed in the 1970s. In 1981, BITNET (Because It's Time Network) started up at the City University of New York and in the mid-1980s, ARPANet was handed over to the National Science Foundation and NSFNet was born. In 1987, the NorthWest Academic Computing Consortium was founded, a cooperative alliance of ten institutions in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and North Dakota that began to bring networks and computing infrastructure to our universities, libraries, schools and hospitals.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the technology revolution was pushed by the competitive, outsized Silicon Valley imaginings of entrepreneurs like Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Jim Clark and Marc Andreessen, Jerry Yang and David Filo, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, and others. Companies like SGI, Netscape, Excite, and AskJeeves surfaced, were bought and sold for billions and torpedoed into history. CP/M was forgotten, a keyboard turned into GUI, is now touch and voice, and before long, will be brain signals. Digital communications, inexpensive storage, brilliant software designers and ever more micro-miniaturized devices have transformed our world.

Despite some of the most inventive and disruptive technologies in human history, libraries have stood the test of time and continued to innovate and deliver. Librarians have watched and learned as these technologies evolved. They've adapted. They've taken the best that the digital revolution has offered and used it for the public good, for information sharing, community engagement, and new knowledge creation.

Enjoy this special *OLAQ* issue on digital repositories and data sharing. Join me in thinking about the past, celebrating our present, and marveling at our future.

## References

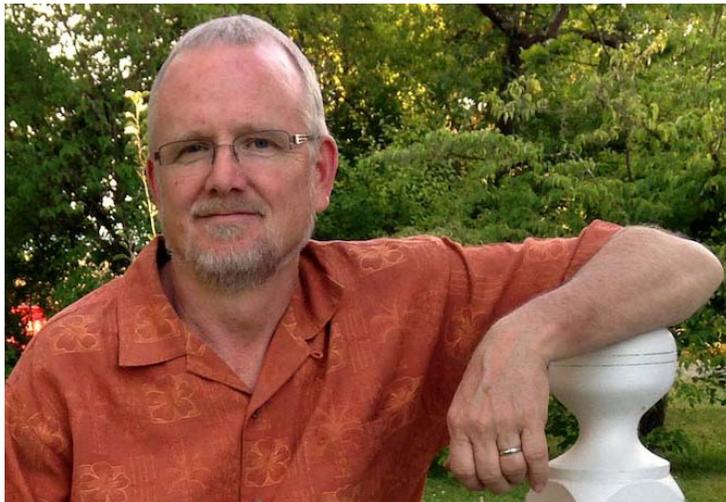
- Baum, Claude. (1981). *The system builders: The story of SDC*. Santa Monica, CA: Systems Development Corporation.
- Clark, Jim with Owen Edwards. (1999). *Netscape time: The making of the billion-dollar start-up that took on Microsoft*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Galloway, Scott. (2017). *The four: The hidden DNA of Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google*. New York, NY: Portfolio/Penguin.
- Northwest Academic Computing Consortium (2019). Retrieved from <http://www.nwacc.org/about/index.html#history>
- Vogelstein, Fred. (2013). *Dogfight: How Apple and Google went to war and started a revolution*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Woolley, Scott. (2016). *The network: The battle for the airwaves and the birth of the communications age*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.
- Zakon, Robert H'obbes. (2018). *Hobbes' Internet timeline 25*. Retrieved from <https://www.zakon.org/robert/internet/timeline/>

Maureen Flanagan Battistella  
*OLAQ Guest Editor*  
 Southern Oregon University



# From OASIS to Samvera: Three Decades of Online Access to OSU's Archives and Special Collections

**by Lawrence A. Landis**  
Director, Special Collections  
and Archives Research Center,  
Oregon State University  
Libraries and Press  
[larry.landis@oregonstate.edu](mailto:larry.landis@oregonstate.edu)



LARRY has been director of the OSU Libraries and Press's Special Collections and Archives Research Center since 2011. He has worked as an archivist at OSU since 1991, and has been active with creating digital collections and online access to collections.

*Oregon State University has been a leader in making unique resources accessible via the Internet. Individually or with collaborative partners, OSU made collection information, exhibits and entire collections available online. This timeline article presents OSU's major projects and developments to promote online accessibility over the past thirty years.*

## Background

For several decades, Oregon State University has been at the forefront of making library and archives resources available online. Many of these efforts have been collaborative in nature; OSU has worked with a broad range of library and archives/special collections partners in Oregon and the Northwest.

Within the Oregon State University Libraries and Press (OSULP)<sup>1</sup>, the University Archives (Archives) and the Special Collections, in collaboration with other library units, both utilized digital technology to enhance access to collections and collection-related information. This enhanced access has increased since the 2011 merger of the units into the Special Collections and Archives Research Center (SCARC).

OSU's experience is not unique, though it serves as a valuable example of the transformation of Oregon's libraries and archives in the digital age. The timeline that follows outlines some of the critical developments and experiences in OSULP's quest to make archives and special collections materials more accessible through digital technology.

## 1989

OSULP's online catalog, OASIS, went public on January 1, and "within a few minutes, users were beginning to discover the joys of online searching" (Wilson, 2004, p. 10). Although the online catalog initially provided access to books and journals, its launch set the stage for similar access to archival and manuscript materials in the future.



<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this article, OSULP refers to the OSU Libraries, even before the addition of the OSU Press in 2007.

**1991**

Early that year, the University Archives (not part of the OSULP at the time)<sup>2</sup> began using MicroMARC:amc for accessioning new materials and creating catalog records. The software was developed by Michigan State University for use on stand-alone PCs. A long-term goal of the Archives was to make the catalog records created by the system available through a university-wide network. Special Collections was also using MicroMARC:amc around this time to catalog the scientific offprints in Linus Pauling's papers.

**1993**

In June the Archives initiated online delivery of finding aids, the Archives and Records Management Handbook, and the university's records retention schedule through OSU's Gopher server. The Archives was an early Gopher adopter. Among the first finding aids made available via the Gopher included the College of Forestry Records and the papers of economist Emery N. Castle. In 1994 the Archives added to the OSU Gopher descriptive information of complementary state records held by the State Archives of Oregon in Salem (OSU Archives, 1993, unpaginated insert).

**1994**

Special Collections began mass digitization of the Ava Helen and Linus Pauling Papers. The project used Laserfiche imaging software and optical character recognition (OCR) software developed by Calera. The intent was to make the entire collection accessible online, with researchers able to view the original document and the OCR text side-by-side. Online access to large parts of the collection was ultimately abandoned because of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, which would have inhibited the ability to publish anything not authored by Pauling. However, this work set the stage for Special Collections' later digital projects that featured aspects of the Pauling Papers and Pauling's work (OSU Libraries and Press, 1994, p. 4).

In August the Archives and State Archives of Oregon collaboratively developed the first archival online exhibit in Oregon, "Fighters on the Farm Front: Oregon's Emergency Farm Labor Service, 1943–1947." The exhibit, made available through the State Archives' web server, was an expanded, digital version of a successful traveling exhibit of the same name that had been developed by the OSU Archives and funded by the Oregon Council for the Humanities. The State Archives web site, launched in 1994, was purported to be the first institutional archives website in the world (Northwest Archivists, 1997, p. 5).

In collaboration with the OSU Libraries' cataloging unit, the Archives began submitting MARC records for its manuscript collections to the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections, which in turn loaded them into the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN). By 1997, approximately 40 MARC records had been submitted (Nielsen, 2003, p. 28).

---

<sup>2</sup>The University Archives was established as a department of OSULP in 1961. In the late 1960s, due to its increased emphasis on records management, the Archives became part of the university's central administration. After a reorganization within the central administration, the Archives again became part of the Libraries in 2000. Special Collections was established in 1986 as a department within the Libraries. The two departments merged in 2011 to form the Special Collections and Archives Research Center (SCARC).



**1995**

On March 8 the Orbis consortium (established in 1993) launched its online union catalog, which included records from five of Oregon's public higher education institutions and two private institutions. Patron initiated borrowing became available to the twelve consortium members in March 1997. OSULP joined the Alliance in 1996, and its bibliographic records were made available in early 1999 (Chmelir, 2015, pp. 2–3, 5).

On September 1, the Archives launched its website. It offered graphics, hyperlinking and a much larger file handling capability than the Gopher. It initially included program information, OSU's Archives and Records Management Handbook, information about and links to other archival repositories and organizations, and links to finding aids still on the Gopher. The first finding aids were made available via the website later that month. Special Collections also had a website by this time.

**1996**

The Archives developed the first exhibits for its website. They included a chronological history of OSU (which still exists as an Omeka exhibit) and the "Gallery of Presidents of Oregon State University" (Northwest Archivists, 1996, p. 15). The exhibits were developed using basic HTML encoding.

**1997**

The Archives' Gopher was discontinued early in the year.

**2000**

The Archives retired MicroMARC:amc, as it was not Y2K compliant. The Archives became part of OSULP. This administrative move jump-started work begun in 1993 to create and upload MARC records into OSU's online catalog. In September, the first MARC records of Archives holdings were loaded in the OSU online catalog, OASIS, as well as the Orbis catalog and OCLC.

**2001**

OSULP selected CONTENTdm as its digital collection platform for images. In October 2002, the libraries launched its first digital collection using CONTENTdm—the "Braceros in Oregon Photograph Collection." This collection was selected because it was relatively small, yet had a high scholarly profile. The parent company of CONTENTdm at the time, DiMeMa, featured the Braceros collection in December 2002 (Landis & Fernandez, 2012, pp. 23–24). This collection is now part of Oregon Digital—<https://oregondigital.org/sets/braceros>.

At the Online Northwest meeting in Portland in January, the Archives and several other archives and special collections in the Pacific Northwest agreed to collaborate on developing a union catalog of archival collection finding aids. The group selected the name Northwest Digital Archives. With OSULP as the lead institution, the group applied for—and received—funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Thirteen institutions participated in the grant, which began on July 1, 2002, and ran through December



31, 2004.<sup>3</sup> The finding aids utilized the Encoded Archival Description (EAD), a metadata schema for presenting archival finding aids online. The grant also required the creation of collection-level MARC records for all collections included in the database. The NWDA database was launched in October 2004.

### 2002

Special Collections created its first digital collection featuring content from the Ava Helen and Linus Pauling Papers—Pauling’s forty-six research notebooks. The first documentary history website pertaining to Pauling’s career was launched in 2003—“Linus Pauling and the Race for DNA” (re-released 2009). It was followed by six subsequent documentary histories and a highly respected blog, *The Pauling Blog*, which was established in March 2008. The multimedia websites include photographs, documents, publications, and videos were built using an XML-based platform developed by Special Collections faculty and staff.

### 2005

OSULP and its partner institutions applied to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for a second grant to support further development of the Northwest Digital Archives. This successful grant of \$300,000 enabled the NWDA consortium to add several partner institutions, add considerable content to the finding aids database, and develop a long-term sustainability plan. The NEH also designated the NWDA as a “We the People Project,” a designation created in 2002 to honor projects that enhance the teaching and understanding of American history. The phase II project ran from July 1, 2005, to September 30, 2007 (Landis, 2007, pp. 2–3, 8).

OSULP launched its institutional repository, *ScholarsArchive@OSU*. Its primary purpose was to serve as a repository for online access to the scholarship of OSU faculty and graduate students, though a secondary purpose was to provide a repository for key born-digital university records. It was originally configured using the DSpace platform, designed by Hewlett-Packard and MIT. In its early years, *ScholarsArchive* consistently achieved high rankings among U.S. university institutional repositories by Webometrics.

### 2007

The Northwest Digital Archives became a program of the Orbis Cascade Alliance at the end of its phase II NEH grant. This resulted in eight new members joining the NWDA.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Participants in the initial NWDA grant project were Oregon State University (University Archives and Special Collections), the University of Oregon, the Oregon Historical Society, the University of Washington, Washington State University, Montana Historical Society, University of Montana, University of Idaho, Whitworth College, Western Washington University, Washington State Archives (Main and Central Washington branches), Seattle Municipal Archives, and Pacific Lutheran University. The initial NEH grant support was approximately \$350,000.

<sup>4</sup> The new member institutions were Portland Community College, Central Oregon Community College, Oregon Institute of Technology, Western Oregon University, Oregon Health & Sciences University, Eastern Washington University, Central Washington University, and Willamette University.



**2008**

OSULP digitized all of the university's general catalogs, from 1866–67 to present. This was the first in a series of projects that provided online access to key OSU historical publications series in support of OSU's sesquicentennial celebration, OSU150, in 2017–18. The catalogs were initially made available through ScholarsArchive@OSU, and were moved to Oregon Digital in 2016, after a new Hydra based version of ScholarsArchive was developed. Subsequent OSU publications series that have been added to Oregon Digital include yearbooks, the alumni magazine, commencement programs, sports media guides, and *Oregon's Agricultural Progress*, a quarterly review of agricultural research at OSU. All publications that are continuing are added annually. The yearbooks site has had nearly 100,000 views since its release.

**2009**

OSULP began implementing Omeka, an open source digital exhibits platform developed by George Mason University. The first two exhibits developed using this platform were Special Collections' "A Short History of the Seed and Nursery Catalogue in Europe and the U.S." (<http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/omeka/exhibits/show/seed>), released in January 2010, and an updated and expanded version of the Archives' "Fighters on the Farm Front" (<http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/omeka/exhibits/show/fighters>), released in August 2010.

OSULP and the University of Oregon Libraries collaborated on a joint digital collection featuring historic maps from each university's collections. This project was undertaken as a contribution to the state's sesquicentennial celebration and set the stage for the future development of digital collections infrastructure.<sup>5</sup>

OSULP received an LSTA grant of \$69,000 for development of a digital resources portal that would allow users to search digital collections from the seven Oregon University System (OUS) institutions, and other academic libraries, museums and archives around the state. Terry Reese, OSULP's Gray Chair for Innovative Library Services, was the principal investigator for the Oregon Digital Library Project. It utilized LibraryFind, an open-source search tool previously developed by OSULP with LSTA funds. Additional grant funding from the Oregon Heritage Commission enabled Reese to work with the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center and the Oregon Coast Historical Society to investigate models for large cultural heritage organizations to provide cost-effective assistance to smaller archives and museums. Although his concept proved feasible, there was no lead institution that could commit to hosting the portal long-term.

**2010**

OSULP and the UO Libraries formed a joint task force to begin looking at a replacement system for CONTENTdm, which was not meeting the needs of the two libraries. One of the outcomes of this group was the hosting of both libraries' CONTENTdm collections on the University of Oregon's server in order to reduce licensing costs and to provide a cross-functional set of collections. A new URL was adopted—<https://oregondigital.org/catalog/>—which formally established the Oregon Digital partnership that continues today. In its November 2010 report, the task force reported on three systems that had been selected for user testing, out of a total of twelve that had received an initial review. Of the three, Fedora Commons (Islandora



<sup>5</sup> The collection is still available in Oregon Digital at <https://oregondigital.org/sets/ormaps>.

and Hydra/Blacklight) was the most promising, though it was felt there was not yet the programming capacity to develop a new platform. As an interim measure, CONTENTdm was upgraded to a newer version.

### 2012

In February, OSULP and UO Libraries agreed on the development of the new Oregon Digital platform using Hydra, and in November commenced building a prototype. By July 2013, the prototype of the site was available for review by key faculty at both institutions, and Oregon Digital became a Hydra Partner (OSU Libraries & Press, 2013, p. 1).

### 2014

In May, after nearly eighteen months of development, the new Hydra based Oregon Digital platform was launched. Improvements included faceted subjects, mobile device compatibility, custom image (zoom-and-pan) document (page turning) viewers, and greatly improved search functionality.

### 2015

After investigating several digital asset management systems, OSULP began development of a new platform for ScholarsArchive@OSU. The Hydra/Sufia platform (now known as Samvera) was selected as the replacement for DSpace (Van Tuyl, Zhang & Boock, 2015, p. 2).

The Orbis Cascade Alliance launched a substantially redesigned and improved site for the Northwest Digital Archives and renamed it Archives West. The new name reflected the addition of partners in Utah—Utah State University, University of Utah, and the Salt Lake County Archives.

### 2016

SCARC began using OSU's MediaSpace platform for delivering digitized video and audio content. Since 2016, SCARC has made 1,698 media files available via MediaSpace, including more than 450 moving images.<sup>6</sup>

### 2017

SCARC implemented the Oral History Metadata Synchronizer (OHMS), a tool for describing oral history interviews developed by the University of Kentucky. It combined this tool with Omeka and custom .css and .php files to create a visually appealing, functional, and easy to use content management system for its oral histories. The first SCARC project to utilize the hybrid tool was its "Voices" project, a series of subject-based oral history collections (Petersen, 2018, pp. 6–7).

In the Fall, SCARC launched the OSU Sesquicentennial oral history project, its website of oral history interviews that supported OSU's 150th-anniversary celebration. The site features

---

<sup>6</sup> SCARC content on MediaSpace can be found at <https://media.oregonstate.edu/category/Special+Collections+and+Archives+Research+Center/2947392>



full video interviews, transcripts and background information for more than 240 OSU faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends. See <http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/oh150/index.html>.

The new Samvera based version of ScholarsArchive@OSU went live in November.

## 2018

Oregon Digital began participating in the DPLA through the Mountain West Digital Library (MWDL). Discussion of this started in 2017. By early 2019 SCARC content in the DPLA included the Ken Gray Insect Image Collection, OSU Yearbooks, and OAC Illustrated Booklets (Mountain West Digital Library, n.d.). Several other collections were pending.

OSULP and UO Libraries began development of Oregon Digital 2 (OD2), the next iteration of its joint Samvera based digital collections platform. The launch of OD2 is slated for Fall 2020. As of early 2019, Oregon Digital consists of more than 115 digital collections (sets) comprised of unique digitized and born-digital materials—including photographs, articles, publication series, sheet music, manuscripts, and ephemera. It consists of more than 257,000 digital objects, including 217,000 images, nearly 34,000 files of textual documents, 2,165 moving image files, and 242 sound files (University of Oregon Libraries & OSU Libraries & Press, 2019). OSU's Historical Images of OSU is the most frequently used resource in Oregon Digital, having received more than 54,000 views (7.2% of all views) since early 2017.

## Conclusion

Looking ahead, SCARC and OSULP are well situated to continue their leadership in enhancing online access to unique collections and materials. Their culture of experimentation and collaboration is well ingrained and forms core components of the OSULP strategic plan. Oregon Digital 2 will greatly improve access to existing digital collections, and the continuous improvement of the Orbis Cascade Alliance's Archives West will ensure easy access to contextualized information about archival collections. 

## References

Chmelir, L. (2015). Orbis and the founding of the Orbis Cascade Alliance: A decade of academic library collaboration in the Pacific Northwest, 1993–2003. Retrieved from <https://www.orbiscascade.org/history-of-alliance/>

Landis, L. A. (2007). Final performance report: Northwest Digital Archives, 1–2. Retrieved from [https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/concern/technical\\_reports/cc08hm50r?locale=en](https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/concern/technical_reports/cc08hm50r?locale=en)

Landis, L. A. & Fernandez, N. (2012). Documenting Oregon's Latino heritage: The Braceros in Oregon photograph collection. <https://doi.org/10.7710/1093-7374.1366>

Mountain West Digital Library. (n.d.). Oregon State University libraries. Retrieved from <https://mwdl.org/partners/OregonStateUniversityLibraries.php>

Nielsen, E. A. (2003). Evolution of access to OSU archives, 1991–2003. Presentation made at the 2003 Oregon Library Association annual conference. Retrieved from <https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/concern/defaults/fb494976p?locale=en>



Northwest Archivists. (1996). News of the northwest—Oregon State University. *Easy Access*, 22(1), 15. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/yytnt2zj>

Northwest Archivists. (1997). Managing web services workshop announcement. *Easy Access*, 23(1), 5. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/y5v6xzch>

OSU Archives. (1993). Gopher in the Archives. *OSU Record*. Retrieved from <https://oregondigital.org/sets/osu-historical-publications/oregondigital:fx71cw45s>

OSU Libraries & Press. (1994). OSU's special Pauling collection going on-line. *The Messenger*, 9(2), 4–5. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/y46ypps9>

OSU Libraries & Press. (2013). UO/OSU DAMS future. Hydra status report to the OSULP leadership and management group, LAMP.

Petersen, C. (2018). The Voices Initiative at Oregon State University Libraries: Using OHMS and Omeka to describe and provide access to oral history content. Presentation made at the Northwest Archivists annual meeting, Warm Springs, Oregon, 27 April 2018. Retrieved from <https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/concern/defaults/db78tj214>

University of Oregon Libraries & OSU Libraries & Press. (2019). Oregon Digital. Retrieved from <https://oregondigital.org/catalog/>

Van Tuyl, S.; Zhang, H.; & Boock, M. (2015). Analysis of challenges and opportunities for Migrating ScholarsArchive@OSU to a new technical platform: Requirements, analysis, environmental scan, and recommended next steps. OSULP technical report. Retrieved from [https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/concern/technical\\_reports/k06989027](https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/concern/technical_reports/k06989027)

Wilson, R. (2004). History of the library: The Mel George years. *The Messenger*, 19(1), 10–11. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/y6bwqtsl>



# DPLA in the Pacific Northwest:

## The Orbis Cascade Alliance Case

by **Mark Dahl**

Director of  
Aubrey R. Watzek Library,  
Lewis & Clark College  
[dahl@lclark.edu](mailto:dahl@lclark.edu)

and

**Zachariah Selley**

Associate Head of Special  
Collections and College Archivist,  
Lewis & Clark College  
[sellez@lclark.edu](mailto:sellez@lclark.edu)



MARK is currently director of the Aubrey R. Watzek Library at Lewis & Clark College in Portland. He has served in academic libraries for 20 years as a systems librarian, associate director for technical and digital services, and director. His professional interests include digital initiatives, student engagement with library resources and the liberal arts college library. He has presented and written extensively on new and emerging roles for academic libraries. In recent years, he has held leadership roles on the board and Teams of the Orbis Cascade Alliance consortium. He holds an undergraduate degree in history and journalism and master's degrees in history and library/information science.



ZACHARIAH is the Associate Head of Special Collections and College Archivist for Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. He is a contributor to the Orbis Cascade Alliance as a member of the Unique and Local Content Team, and current Chair of the Archival Collection Management Standing Group. Additionally, Selley teaches in support of the archives program for the Emporia State University School of Library and Information Management. Selley holds undergraduate degrees in philosophy and music history, and a master's degree in library and information science.

*The Orbis Cascade Alliance's journey to becoming a Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) Service Hub illustrates some important challenges and opportunities in the world of digital cultural heritage work. Released in 2013, DPLA brings together cultural heritage content on a national digital platform. Since 2014 the Alliance has moved towards DPLA membership as part of a broader strategy to aggregate its members' digital cultural heritage collections and make them more discoverable. Competing strategies for making content discoverable, limited financial resources, and differences in missions between institutions have been obstacles as the Alliance has worked towards aggregated collections and DPLA membership. The DPLA has experienced recent growing pains as evidenced by a staff downsizing in November 2018 and the closing of a major Service Hub shortly thereafter. Though the Alliance membership has made extensive progress in metadata standardization and aggregation in preparation for a DPLA ingest, as of June 2019, Alliance DPLA activity is on hold until a new Program Manager for Unique and Local Content comes on board.*



The Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) came about at a time when it was clear that the modern Internet had coalesced around a number of major web players. By 2010, Google firmly controlled search, Amazon dwarfed competitors in online retail, and Facebook was well on its way to leading in social media. Any sense of decentralization there may have been in the early web seemed diminished. Online activity was, as is the case today, typically initiated from one of a few destinations controlled by big Internet players.

Meanwhile, libraries across the United States had been busy digitizing historical photos, manuscripts, and other digital objects throughout the 1990s and the 2000s, mounting them online on their own websites for their patrons and audiences beyond to access. The relationship between these locally controlled collections and Google was a symbiotic one, in that the search engine could drive traffic across the globe to these objects in a way that local library website search functions could not.

DPLA was conceived around the realization that people started their Internet journeys at central places like Google and the conviction that libraries and other cultural institutions needed to have one of these destinations to call their own. By 2010, European national libraries were developing their own centralized digital libraries and the European Union had recently launched the Europeana meta-aggregator and digital platform. In 2010, a group of library and foundation leaders gathered at Harvard University conceived of DPLA as “an open, distributed network of comprehensive online resources that would draw on the nation’s living heritage from libraries, universities, archives, and museums in order to educate, inform, and empower everyone in the current and future generations.” (Darnton, 2013).

DPLA launched to the world in 2013 as a platform for discovering digital cultural heritage content at the nation’s libraries and museums. DPLA is based on a distributed model in which Hubs push content to the central DPLA index; Content Hubs link institutions with a large enough content base to justify their own pipeline to DPLA and Service Hubs aggregate content from multiple smaller institutions in a geographic area. As of September 2018, DPLA provided access to over 30 million digital records from 28 direct member hubs, representing over 1300 institutions (DPLA, 2017).

The Orbis Cascade Alliance is a library consortium of 38 colleges and universities in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Shortly before DPLA came into existence, the Alliance’s Northwest Digital Archive program (NWDA) had been developing a tool to facilitate discovery of digitized cultural heritage content. Funded by an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant from 2011–2013, the Demonstration Project, Cross-Search and Context Utility (XCU), later renamed Archive Engine West (AEW), brought together digital objects (scanned photographs, manuscripts, etc.) with the detailed metadata and context provided by archival finding aids. During the course of the AEW project, DPLA emerged as a alternative option to aggregate digitized cultural heritage content.

Notwithstanding favorable reviews of the AEW demonstration site, in March 2014 the Alliance Council of library directors decided to wind down the AEW project. With an eye toward possible DPLA participation, the Alliance Content Creation and Dissemination Team (CCD) did, however, move forward on an AEW-related initiative to establish digital content metadata standards, which would be useful in the case of Alliance DPLA participation (Orbis Cascade Alliance, 2014).

As DPLA got up and running in 2013, DPLA leadership sought to sign on Service Hubs that would cover the entirety of the United States. In 2013, the Pacific Northwest was a blank area on DPLA’s map (though the University of Washington was an early Content



Hub). The question of what organization(s) could potentially fulfill the Service Hub role in the Pacific Northwest quickly became the subject for discussion in the Northwest library and archival community.

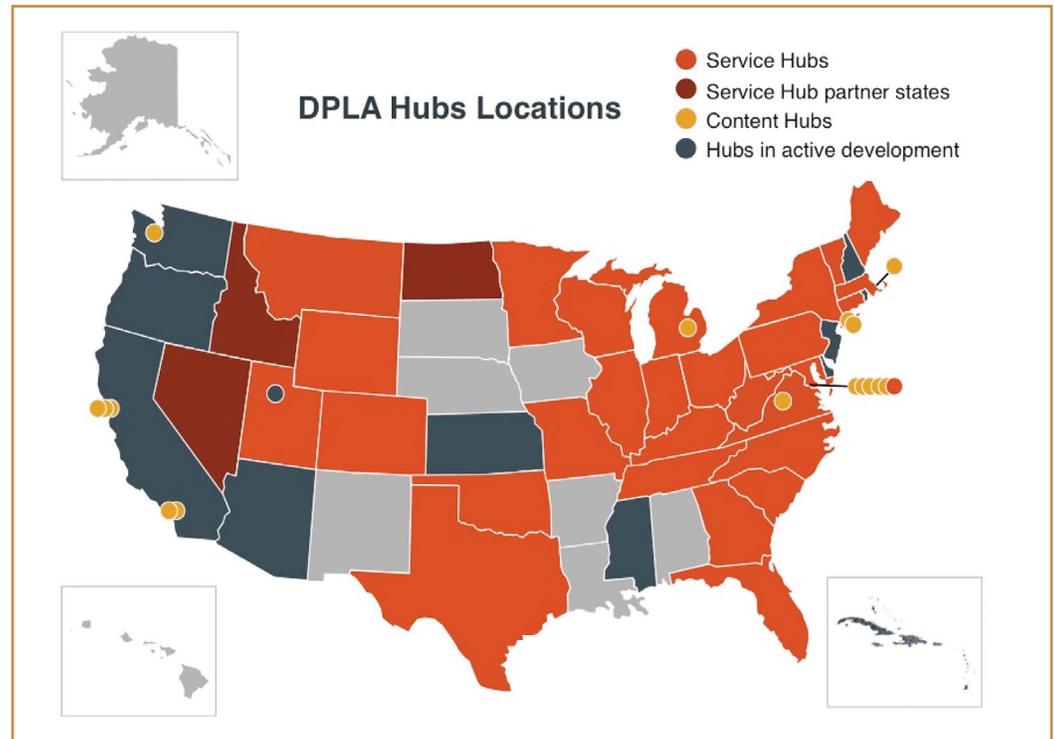


Fig. 1. Digital Public Library of America: Our Hubs. (2019)

In the Summer of 2014, DPLA, Oregon State University, and the University of Oregon sponsored a “metadatathon” to help organizations understand and better prepare their metadata for eventual inclusion in the DPLA. DPLA inclusion depended on standardization in the following fields: rights statement, date, creator, and language. At this time many institutions within the Alliance had records with inconsistent or missing data in these and other fields and to further complicate things, these issues were present in multiple record types including MARC, Dublin Core, and MODS (Content Space DPLA: Orbis Cascade Alliance Dashboard, n.d.).

In Spring of 2015, the Washington and Oregon State Libraries hosted the Northwest Digital Collections Summit in Salem, Oregon. Representatives from public and academic libraries as well as historical societies attended the event. Finding a collective way forward for Pacific Northwest DPLA participation was an underlying theme of the event. The recommendations that emerged from the Summit included: shared digital content metadata standards, collaborative projects in Washington and Oregon that would lead to eventual DPLA participation, and support for the Alliance CCD program and its aspirations for eventual DPLA participation (Plumer, 2015).



DPLA was a perennial topic at Alliance Board and Council Meetings from November 2014 through March 2016. Representatives from the CCD repeatedly advanced the case that an Alliance DPLA Service Hub would hold benefits for all Alliance member institutions. In a presentation to the Alliance Board of Directors in June 2015, Trevor Bond, chair of the CCD, highlighted the platform's ability to bring together digital objects on a common topic. He used the case of a student or scholar researching Japanese internment camps during World War II as an example, specifically the instance of the Heart Mountain Relocation Center. There are images and texts pertaining to the Center scattered across a number of digital repositories in the United States. DPLA held the potential of pulling them together for the convenience of the researcher, especially once Pacific Northwest content was part of DPLA's index. Bond also emphasized the platform's strengths in providing clear rights statements, better subject descriptions, and support for advanced digital humanities inquiry (Bond & Allison-Bunnell, 2015).

These arguments did not immediately convince Alliance Council members to move on DPLA. There was skepticism regarding DPLA's benefit to institutions without significant digital collections content. Cost and sustainability were also concerns given that DPLA was heavily funded with time-limited grants. The Alliance had joined the Western Regional Storage Trust a few years before only to pull out because of increasing membership costs once initial grant funding ceased ("Shared Content Program Update," 2015). There was also discussion about whether the DPLA effort should be an "opt-in" program in which only some Alliance member institutions would participate or an "all-in" program in which all Alliance member institutions would participate and bear costs. Because the DPLA Hub model was conceived so that Hubs would bring content into DPLA from a variety of libraries and museums in a given region, some Alliance Council members were concerned that an Alliance DPLA Hub would commit the Alliance to providing DPLA services to non-Alliance libraries and that this would stretch the Alliance's organizational capacity.

The Alliance Council adopted a proposal entitled "Aggregate Alliance Digital Content" at its March 2016 meeting. The proposal situated DPLA membership in the wider project of aggregating Alliance digital collections content. It called for the adaptation of the previously developed AEW digital object harvester to pull together remediated Alliance digital object metadata. The proposal included application for Oregon Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant funding to support the preparation of the 50,000 digital objects that DPLA required for initial ingest (Orbis Cascade Alliance, 2016). Furthermore, the proposal indicated the intention of developing a "pipeline" of digital collections metadata into Primo, the Alliance's discovery tool. The proposal was "all-in" rather than "opt-in" and skirted the question of service to non-Alliance institutions by setting the expectation for "future consideration of service to non-members with a sustainable business plan" (Orbis Cascade Alliance, 2016, p. 2).

In June 2016, the Alliance announced the award of the LSTA grant, which focused on preparing Alliance metadata for the DPLA as well as creating openly accessible documentation and training modules on metadata creation and cleanup that would be available to institutions working with digital objects beyond the Alliance ("Alliance Receives Oregon LSTA Grant," 2016). From 2016–2017, the Alliance, in collaboration with the Oregon State Library and Washington State Library, implemented the grant project.



The question of how to pipeline digital content from individual repositories to DPLA was of foremost importance and integral to the metadata creation and cleanup initiative. In collaboration with DPLA staff, consultant Ethan Gruber adapted and expanded the AEW project metadata harvester. Consultant Anneliese Dehner further improved its functionality and interface design (“Alliance Harvester Beta Testing Opens,” 2017). The harvester allows Alliance members who have digital collections described in Dublin Core the ability to contribute those collections for aggregation in DPLA or other aggregated discovery tools.

Following the extensive efforts in metadata creation and cleanup directed by the CCD’s Digital Collections working group, on May 1, 2017, the new harvester was released and began to pull submitted OAI sets of digital objects for DPLA ingest. Initial contributions included content from 16 Alliance institutions with a total ingest of over 67,000 digital objects (“Alliance Harvester Contributions July 2017,” 2017), exceeding the primary goal of 50,000 items. These objects were harvested from Digital Asset Management Systems, Institutional Repositories, and content management systems in use by Alliance members that including ContentDM, Digital Commons, Hydra, DSpace, Omeka, and other homegrown systems (“Content Space DPLA: Orbis Cascade Alliance Dashboard,” n.d.).

During the Alliance’s LSTA grant, the CCD’s Digital Collections Working Group and Dublin Core Best Practices Standing Group did a remarkable amount of work to ensure this success. This included creating documentation and holding 20 web-based workshops and forums focused on metadata preparation and best practices (“LSTA Grant 2016-2017: What We Accomplished!,” 2018). In July 2017, the Alliance received a second grant from Oregon State Library to support continued digital collections metadata remediation. Meanwhile, Alliance staff worked to complete the DPLA Hub application process. In early 2018 the DPLA accepted the Alliance Service Hub application, and the first test data ingest occurred that spring. By late 2018 the Alliance harvester included over 120,000 digital objects from 24 member institutions with hopes of an accepted DPLA ingest and a live date by early 2019 (Orbis Cascade Harvester, n.d.).

In November 2018, DPLA’s executive director announced a strategic shift that involved the layoff of six staff members. The official announcements about the change assured the public that DPLA was still committed to cultural heritage content aggregation and the hub network that makes that function possible (DPLA Update Q&A, 2018). The abrupt downsizing, however, was a sobering moment for the project. Shortly following the DPLA announcement, in January 2019, the Metropolitan New York Library Council, which runs New York State’s DPLA Service Hub announced that it was shutting down the Hub due to a lack of a stable revenue source. Since 2013 the Hub has facilitated the addition of 443,200 records from about 200 organizations in the state of New York (METRO Library Council, 2019). The difficulty of sustaining a Service Hub in a state with a relatively dense and well-funded grouping of educational and cultural organizations was another major sign of stress on DPLA’s system for aggregating cultural heritage content.

Following DPLA’s shift in strategy in November 2018 and in the midst of its own leadership and staffing transitions, the Alliance Board of Directors decided in December 2018 to put DPLA activities on hold. The Alliance expects to restart work as a DPLA Service Hub once a new Program Manager for Unique and Local Content is in place sometime in the latter half of 2019.



When asked about the state of the Alliance DPLA effort in January 2019, the interim Alliance executive director Maija Anderson recalled that the Alliance has struggled with the challenge of aggregating digital collections in a few instances in the past including the aforementioned Archives Engine West project and a previous project to launch a shared institutional repository. Regardless of the fate of DPLA, Anderson said she believes the ultimate goal is to improve the discoverability of digital collections, and aggregation is one means to that end.

DPLA's challenges reflect some of the broader hurdles facing nonprofit organizations that provide services on top of other nonprofits. These organizations include more established ones such as the global OCLC cooperative and regional consortia like the Orbis Cascade Alliance as well as newer, start-up type organizations like DPLA, the Western Regional Storage Trust, the Digital Preservation Network, and publishers dedicated to open access such as the Public Library of Science (PLOS) and Lever Press. These organizations use scale to provide twenty-first-century information services whose impact is not constrained by the borders of a single institution.

While the beneficial effects of these organizations may be widely diffused in the form of long term preservation of knowledge and dissemination of scholarly or cultural content, their revenue models often demand that the cost of their operation be borne by membership fees from libraries. Sometimes libraries just do not see a high enough local return on investment to justify paying those fees. Though DPLA does not have high membership fees for Service Hubs, the New York State case demonstrates that operating the Hubs themselves is a significant cost. To be sustainable going forward, DPLA and its Service Hubs will need to develop structures that control costs and provide tangible value to participants.

The screenshot shows the DPLA website interface. At the top, there is a search bar and the DPLA logo. Below the search bar, the 'Primary Source Sets' section is highlighted. It includes a description: 'Primary source collections exploring topics in history, literature, and culture developed by educators — complete with teaching guides for class use.' Below this, there are filters for 'Subject' (US History), 'Time Period' (All Time Periods), and 'Sort by' (Recently Added). The main content area displays six source set cards, each with an image and a title:

- California Gold Rush**: Expansion and Reform (1801-1861), US History, Migration
- Treaty of Versailles and the End of World War I**: The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930), US History, World History, Law and Government
- Cotton Gin and the Expansion of Slavery**: Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1820s), Expansion and Reform (1801-1861), US History, Science and Technology, African Americans
- Victorian Era**: Expansion and Reform (1801-1861), The Development of the Industrial United States (1870-1900), US History, World History, Arts
- Immigration through Angel Island**: The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930), US History, Asian Americans, Migration
- Beginnings of the American Red Cross**: The Development of the Industrial United States (1870-1900), The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930), US History, Women

Fig. 2. Digital Public Library of America: Primary Source Sets. (2019).



Regardless of the financial and organizational challenges of running DPLA, the project has been an important experiment in the ways that libraries can add value to the unique content that they provide in the digital environment. The process of metadata standardization needed for data ingest has pushed organizations to make their metadata consistent, making images and manuscripts easier to parse and sort by researchers and other information seekers.

DPLA's aggregated platform is a web scale place to search and find open content, bringing together related material that would otherwise be siloed in separate digital libraries. Its ability for community members to create primary source sets and exhibitions with manuscripts, letters, maps, and images allows scholars and educators to discover content through context. There are many examples of digital library projects that make creative use of design and technology to educate and inform. DPLA is important because it has created a platform to do this at a national scale with a national content base. When it eventually goes live, the Pacific Northwest centered content provided to DPLA by the Alliance should bolster the coverage of DPLA overall and make DPLA more useful for students and scholars in Pacific Northwest-situated Alliance member institutions and beyond. 

## References

Alliance harvester beta testing opens [Web log post]. (2017, March 31). Retrieved January 16, 2019, from <https://www.orbiscascade.org/blog/11/?bid=781>

Alliance harvester contributions July 2017 [Web log post]. (2017, September 29). Retrieved January 16, 2019, from <https://www.orbiscascade.org/blog/11/?bid=1296>

Alliance receives Oregon LSTA grant [Web log post]. (2016, June 20). Retrieved January 16, 2019, from <https://www.orbiscascade.org/blog/1/?bid=387>

Bond, T, & Allison-Bunnell, J. (June, 17, 2015). Content creation & dissemination team Digital Public Library of America proposal. <https://tinyurl.com/y25zts52>

Content Space DPLA: Orbis Cascade Alliance dashboard. (n.d.). Retrieved January 16, 2019, from <https://tinyurl.com/y4wvocc6>.

Darnton, R. (2013). The National Digital Public Library is launched! *The New York Review of Books*, 60(7). Retrieved July 25, 2019, from <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2013/04/25/national-digital-public-library-launched/>

DPLA. (Rep.). (2017). Strategic plan 2015 through 2017. Retrieved January 16, 2019, from <https://tinyurl.com/y6ozoeob>

DPLA update Q&A. (2018, November 14). Retrieved January 16, 2019, from <https://dp.la/news/dpla-update-qa>

METRO Library Council. (2019). Sunsetting ESDN in July 2019. Retrieved January 29, 2019. <https://metro.org/news/sunsetting-esdn-in-july>



Orbis Cascade Alliance. (2014). *Northwest Digital Archives Steering Team: Archive Engine West proposal for board of directors*.

Orbis Cascade Alliance. (2016). *Content Creation & Dissemination Team proposal to accompany FY17 budget: Aggregate alliance digital content*.

Orbis Cascade Harvester. (n.d.). Retrieved January 16, 2019, from <http://harvester.orbiscascade.org>

Plumer, D. C. (Ed.). (2015). *A Report from the Northwest Digital Collections Summit: Salem, Oregon, March 20, 2015* (pp. 1–28, Rep.). <https://tinyurl.com/y4p6up7o>

Shared Content Program Update [Web log post]. (2015, April 20). Retrieved January 16, 2019, from <https://www.orbiscascade.org/sc-update-april-20-2015>



# The Oregon Digital Newspaper Program's Commitment to Open Access

by Sarah Seymore  
Digital Collections  
Metadata Librarian,  
University of Oregon Libraries  
sseymore@uoregon.edu



SARAH is the Digital Collections Metadata Librarian at the University of Oregon Libraries and Program Manager of the Oregon Digital Newspaper Program (ODNP). She supervises non-MARC cataloging of digitized and born-digital materials for the digital collections repository, Oregon Digital, and digital scholarship projects. In her role as Program Manager of ODNP, she assists patrons with fundraising for newspaper digitization, manages the digitization workflow, and supports outreach to newspaper publishers across the state for born-digital preservation. She holds an undergraduate degree in art history, and a master's degree in library and information science.

*The Oregon Digital Newspaper Program (ODNP) at the University of Oregon Libraries is an initiative to digitize historic and current Oregon newspapers, making them freely available to the public through a keyword-searchable online database. The ODNP is committed to open access and has included collaboration and data sharing with larger programs like the Library of Congress' Chronicling America historic newspaper website. Since 2015, the ODNP has increased its open access mission by archiving and hosting born-digital newspaper content, as well as continuing digitization of historic newspapers from microfilm and print. This article outlines the ODNP's past and current open access efforts, inclusion of diverse content, and open source, sustainable applications, websites, and workflows.*

## Background

Founded in 2009 with a combination of grant funding from Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA), Oregon Cultural Trust, and the National Endowment for the Humanities' National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) in partnership with the Library of Congress, the Oregon Digital Newspaper Program at the University of Oregon (UO) Libraries has provided online access to historic Oregon newspapers for nearly 10 years. A precursor to the digital program, the Oregon Newspaper Microfilming Program, began in the 1950s at UO Libraries, where microfilm was created from participating newspapers from across the state, with positive film reels distributed to a multitude of Oregon libraries. While UO Libraries no longer microfilms newspapers, the Libraries have continued to pursue newspaper digitization and hosting of born-digital newspapers that can be accessed from the Historic Oregon Newspapers website (<http://oregonnews.uoregon.edu>).

Since 2009, the ODNP has received three grants from NDNP, along with additional grants from LSTA, Oregon Cultural Trust, Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association, and private donations. The detailed history of the development of the Program, as well as the first digitization projects that were completed, is outlined by Sheila Rabun in "Oregon Digital Newspaper Program: Preserving History While Shaping the Future" (Rabun, 2012). The Program has changed and grown over the past couple of years by relying less on grants from large organizations and adding new types of newspaper content to create a more diverse and inclusive digital newspaper repository. In January 2019, the ODNP website surpassed one



million pages of newspaper content, and the Program has several digitization projects in the active and upcoming digitization queues. External funding has been vital to the foundation and sustainability of the Program over the years, and recently the ODNP has made conscious decisions to become more independent and self-sustainable by adding a wider variety of historic and current newspapers to the collection, updating workflows and systems, and truly espousing open access principles of preservation and free access to digital newspapers.

### Expanding Digitization and Partnerships

The ODNP's first steps to becoming more self-sufficient began in 2015, with funding from the LSTA Next Generation Newspapers grant, which enabled the transition to a self-supporting newspaper digitization Program. UO Libraries ceased microfilming newspapers in 2015, and the ODNP began accepting and archiving born-digital newspaper PDFs from current publishers, as well as photographing newspapers from print. The Program's decision to preserve born-digital newspapers and end the microfilming project was not only due to the change in direction of newspaper publishing and preservation, but also because to the limitations of the grant-based programs like NDNP, which enforces a limit on how much and what quality newspapers can be digitized. The support from NDNP and Chronicling America allowed the Program to digitize 700,000 pages; however, Chronicling America only allows digitization in grayscale with black and white microfilm. Also, until recently, they only allowed newspaper content in the Public Domain, up to 1923. They recently extended the date range of newspapers that they will digitize through 1963, but these papers have to be thoroughly proven free of copyright. The restrictions also exclude color images and current newspapers that are not microfilmed, including the plethora of born-digital news.

During this transitional phase, Newspapers.com (<https://www.newspapers.com/>) also approached the Program to digitize the University of Oregon's large collection of master negative microfilm to add to their online database. Institutions that have a subscription to Newspapers.com, including UO Libraries, have access to this content, but it will not be openly accessible to all until it is uploaded to the ODNP website in 2020, at the conclusion of a five year embargo period. This partnership was a great way to digitize around thirty titles, including spans of years for the *Oregon Daily Journal* and the *Oregon Statesman*, but the Program is interested in partnering with open access projects and initiatives moving forward. For instance, in 2018, the Program partnered with Reveal Digital (<http://revealdigital.com/>), a project that crowdsources library funding to collectively digitize and provide open access to diverse, often hidden collections. ODNP contributed the digital images of *The Western American*, an Oregon KKK newspaper from 1922–1923 to the Hate in America: White Nationalism and the Press in the 1920s project.

The ODNP has strived to include diverse and inclusive voices in the digital newspaper collection since its foundation with the digitization of *The New Northwest*, *The New Age*, *Portland New Age*, *Weekly Chemawa American*, *The Chemawa American*, and more feminist, African American, and Native American titles. This past year the ODNP was fortunate to receive an anonymous donation for the digitization of *Just Out*, 1983–2011, a landmark LGBTQ+ publication from Portland, and five other Portland-based titles from the 20th century. These include the African American owned and operated titles *The Advocate*, edited by Beatrice Morrow Cannady, the *Portland Inquirer*, the *Oregon Mirror*, and the *Portland Challenger*. These titles will begin to appear online in early 2019. Diversity and inclusion for ODNP also applies to other local newspapers like high school and college newspapers,



smaller neighborhood newspapers, and content that is often overlooked in national newspaper digitization programs. *The Amplifier* of West Linn High School was digitized in 2018, and select issues of *The Grantonian*, the student newspaper of U.S. Grant High School in Portland will be digitized this year.

### Born-Digital News

Collection and preservation of born-digital, currently publishing newspapers has been the greatest change to ODNP in the past few years. Over 100,000 of the 1 million pages online are from current publishers from across the state. There are several reasons, apart from preservation and access, for the benefits of this program. Compared to images scanned from microfilm, born-digital images offer better legibility and more precise keyword search results. Also, public libraries that are invested in adding their local titles to ODNP offer external outreach, support, and quality control for the PDF uploads. Local librarians often check coverage of the online collection before physical copies of the newspapers are discarded, and the Program greatly appreciates this active concern for the coverage of the collection.

The screenshot shows the University of Oregon Libraries website interface. At the top, the logo for the University of Oregon Libraries is displayed. Below it, the main heading reads "Historic Oregon Newspapers". A navigation bar contains links for Home, Titles, Map, Locations, Calendar, and About. A search bar is present with the text "Search Newspaper Pages" and a "Go" button, along with a link to "Advanced Search".

The main content area is titled "The Asian reporter." and indicates it is from "Portland, Or. (1991-current)". Navigation options include "About The Asian reporter.", "Browse Issues by Date", "View Front Pages", "View First Issue", and "View Last Issue".

**Title:**  
The Asian reporter. : (Portland, Or.) 1991-current

**Place of publication:**  
Portland, Or.

**Geographic coverage:**  

- Portland, Multnomah, Oregon | View more titles from this: [City County, State](#)

**Publisher:**  
Asian Reporter

**Dates of publication:**  
1991-current

**Description:**  

- Vol. 1, no. 1 (Jan. 1991)-

**Frequency:**  
Weekly

**Language:**  

- English

**Subjects:**  

- Asian Americans--Oregon--Newspapers.
- Asian Americans.--fast--(OCoLC)fst00818620
- Oregon.--fast--(OCoLC)fst01204579

**Notes:**  

- "International and local newsweekly."
- Also issued by subscription via the World Wide Web.
- Latest issue consulted: Vol. 7, no. 30 (July 22-28, 1997).

**LCCN:**  
sn 97001795

A thumbnail image of the newspaper cover is shown on the right, featuring a large yellow duck and the headline "Giant yellow duck on multi-city tour of Taiwan".

The Asian reporter. January 6, 2014, Image 1



Figure 1. Title page of *The Asian reporter*, a participant in the current newspapers program.

Current publishers are often hesitant to join the Program in order to maintain revenue control of their digital archives. With embargos, the Program is working on more flexible and appealing submission options for publishers. ODNP is constantly trying to add more current newspapers to the website with outreach and frequent communication with publishers across the state. Another goal for 2019 is to lower the barrier for participation with easier uploading and PDF validation/verification for publishers contributing PDFs. Currently, this submission process is done via SSH File Transfer Protocol (SFTP), which can be difficult for some small publishers to manage. Newspaper operations that do not have a programmer on hand to automate the upload process must add manual file uploads into their already busy workflows, placing a burden on smaller publishers especially. Creating an easier submission process is an important next step in ensuring small publications can participate and preserve their newspaper archives. This new process could also be beneficial for the other internal digitization workflows and quality assurance of ODNP.

### **Technological Independence**

With the decision to collect, preserve, and host born-digital news, the ODNP website software and user interface also had to be reconsidered. The software created for the Chronicling America project and NDNP partners, Chronam, was not as customizable as other state-wide digital newspaper programs wanted it to be. In 2015, staff from UO Libraries, the University of Nebraska Libraries, and Penn State Libraries, met to develop the Open Online Newspaper Initiative (Open-ONI) (<https://github.com/open-oni>), which is an open source, collaboratively-developed newspaper-hosting software. Open-ONI's goal is "to lower the entrance bar for libraries, archives, historical societies, and other cultural heritage institutions to display digital newspaper content. [The team] was formed in response to a need for free, easily deployable, flexible, plug-and-play software that is useful for collections large and small, local and national." (Dussault et al, 2017).

The ODNP website upgrade to Open-ONI took place in the summer of 2017, and the migration took a little over a month to complete. The new website has a modern interface with the out-of-the-box template that allows for easy customization and interoperability on mobile devices. There are also new features like the "This day in history" feature, built by Linda Sato, Programmer at UO Libraries, a redesigned map, and a calendar feature for searching by date. As a community-developed and maintained software from the Open-ONI partners, there is easier upkeep and ability to have integrated code with the core repository.

Other systems-related improvements have been made to the in-house workflows and processes for handling the large volume of digitized and born-digital newspaper content. The Newspaper Curation Application (NCA) (<https://tinyurl.com/y5fc6lcz>) was developed in 2016 by Jeremy Echols, Analyst Programmer at UO Libraries, to assist students with organizing, processing, applying metadata, and providing quality control to the newspaper PDFs. In the web-based application, student employees can check PDF upload submissions from publishers participating in the current newspapers program, apply metadata to the PDFs, and review other metadata entries. For ODNP staff, NCA has tools to track issues as they move through the workflow, add new titles and corresponding MARC information, and control the access permissions of the student employees. The open source code of NCA is available on Github.





Figure 2 and 3. The old and new website homepage of the Oregon Digital Newspaper Program.

Looking forward, there is another hurdle the Program has encountered and will need to address—archiving of Oregon-based news websites that do not have print or PDF editions. This year, the Program had to reject one newspaper’s online issues that could not be transformed into legible PDFs with searchable OCR text for the website. In 2019, web archiving solutions will be investigated with a focus on low barrier technologies, open source tools, and automated processes for collecting and preserving these websites. There is also the possibility that investigation of these technologies could assist with the overall PDF submission process from publishers and libraries, as well.

The screenshot shows the NCA Workflow page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for NCA, Titles, Uploaded Issues, Batches, Workflow, Find Issues, MARC Org Codes, and Users. The user is logged in as 'sseyamore'. The main heading is 'Workflow', with sub-tabs for Desk, Metadata Entry (which is selected), and Metadata Review. A message states: 'These issues have been uploaded or scanned, split into pages, and converted to PDF/a format. They still need manual metadata entered before they will be ready to convert to a batch and ingest.' Below this, a section titled 'Issues Needing Metadata Entry' contains a table with the following data:

Title	Date	Actions
Heppner gazette-times. (sn97071042)	2018-07-04	Claim
The daily Astorian. (sn83008376)	2018-11-09	Claim
Appeal tribune. (2004260523)	2018-11-21	Claim
Cannon Beach gazette. (sn96088385)	2018-11-30	Claim
Capital press. (2007260204)	2018-11-23	Claim
Capital press. (2007260204)	2018-11-30	Claim
East Oregonian : (sn88086023)	2018-11-20	Claim
East Oregonian : (sn88086023)	2018-11-21	Claim

Fig. 4. Metadata entry workflow page for students to input newspaper metadata in NCA.

### Future Partnerships and Projects

ODNP is primarily supported by UO Libraries by funding staff time, equipment, and digital storage that is devoted to the Program. The per-page fees for newspaper digitization support student positions that assist with digitization, metadata, and quality review. These costs are \$0.65 per microfilm page and \$0.85 per print page, if photography is needed for physical papers. The costs for newspaper digitization can be prohibitive for small institutions. To assist with fundraising efforts, the ODNP created a Fundraising How-to Guide on the ODNP blog (<https://odnp.uoregon.edu/fundraising-and-grant-writing-how-to-guide/>), which includes best practices for direct fundraising, grant writing, and a list of grants and fundraising resources in Oregon that are supportive of newspaper digitization projects. This guide has been a successful and empowering resource for newspaper digitization advocates across Oregon.



At present, there are several ways to partner with the Program for newspaper digitization. Local public libraries, historical societies, museums, and newspaper enthusiasts have been vital to adding to the contemporary and historical coverage on the website by advocating for funds for newspaper digitization and reaching out to the publishers of their local newspapers to consider joining the current newspapers program. The recent digitization of the *Coquille City Herald*, *Coquille Herald*, and *The Coquille Valley Sentinel* (in process) has been a multi-year digitization project led by Bert Dunn, a community member and author, who is leading outreach for donations to fund the incremental digitization of these reels. Inquiries are often made about a minimum cost for starting a digitization project—there is none! Reels can be added as funding allows, which hopefully provides more flexibility for local budgets and supporters of Oregon cultural heritage.

In 2018, the Program extended the PDF submission workflow and process, allowing public libraries and other organizations that cannot afford the cost of microfilm digitization and have digitized their local title(s) in-house to submit them to the ODNP at a reduced rate of \$0.40 per page. Vernonia Public Library initiated this workflow by contributing scanned PDFs of newspapers from the area, *The Independent* and the *Vernonia's Voice*. These workflows are being refined in hopes that other libraries that have digitized their newspapers for local use would be interested in sharing with the Program (with appropriate technical specifications and copyright permissions) for hosting and preservation on the website.

There are still more refinements that can be made to the internal and external workflows, more newspapers to add to the website, and more partnerships to be initiated. Open access standards for the Program have extended and will continue to extend beyond access to the newspapers; it impacts the day-to-day processes, supported systems and tools, and collaborations and partnerships. The recent changes in the past few years have not changed the core mission of the Program—our commitment to providing free online access to historic Oregon newspapers. 🐼

### References

- Rabun, S. J. (2014). Oregon Digital Newspaper Program: preserving history while shaping the future. *OLA Quarterly*, 18(3), 14–20. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7710/1093-7374.1365>
- Dussault, J. et al. (2017). Introducing the Open Online Newspaper Initiative, presented at DH2017, Montreal, Canada, 2017. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/y2r9jbb2>



# Opportunities With Archives West:

## How a Small Academic Archive Benefits From Membership

by **Becca Evans**  
Acquisitions & Special  
Collections Curator,  
Southern Oregon University  
Hannon Library  
[evansr@sou.edu](mailto:evansr@sou.edu)



BECCA is the Acquisitions & Special Collections Curator for Hannon Library at Southern Oregon University. She has twelve years of experience in public and academic libraries in Michigan and Oregon. She earned a Master in Management degree from Southern Oregon University and will complete the MLIS program at the University of Washington in June of 2020.

*Like many smaller academic organizations, Southern Oregon University's Hannon Library Special Collections and University Archives (SPEC) operates with a limited budget and minimal staffing. Membership to Archives West provides Hannon Library with a framework to enhance discovery, improve collection management, and promote growth and sustainability. The additional resources provided by Archives West and the Orbis Cascade Alliance allow SPEC to increase capacity and improve services to students and community researchers. The underlying framework consists of training sessions, best practices documents, affordable access to ArchivesSpace, and system support. While improved discoverability is often the primary motivator, libraries should not overlook the added value of improved workflows concerning collection management. Overall, the support provided by Archives West enables smaller archives to streamline their management activities while enhancing discoverability for the current users and reaching new users. Participation in Archives West also offers greater visibility, which facilitates the library's outreach and advocacy efforts. The benefits of membership in Archives West are well worth the efforts inherent in implementing new software and altering workflows.*

### Background

Hannon Library's SPEC currently contains 49 manuscript collections and over 70 university record collections. A primary subject search is available in the library's catalog for only eight of these collections. To facilitate access to collection finding aids, Hannon Library maintains a website for Special Collections and University Archives (<https://hanlib.sou.edu/speccoll/>). The site lists most of the manuscript and record collections with a brief description and a link to the collection's specific finding aid. The finding aids are in MS Word and keyword searchable. Each collection requires a search of its finding aid to explore the contents of the collection. The search process requires researchers to open and keyword search individual finding aids to locate materials related to their topic of inquiry. Researchers are unable to conduct a search across the various collections. This creates barriers to efficient discovery and can be frustrating, especially to novice researchers familiar with search functions available through the library's catalog or Google.

Hannon Library began seriously exploring options to improve discoverability while remaining within the library's constraints concerning budget dollars and staffing levels in early 2017. The idea of joining Archives West (Northwest Archives) floated around Han-



non Library for several years. While most staff agreed that participation in Archives West was a good idea, they expressed concerns about the library's limited resources. For many, the staff time required to make the transition outweighed the benefits of joining. SPEC staff's latest proposal to join Archives West emphasized the abundance of support provided by the Alliance in the form of training sessions and related documentation. While this support does not eliminate the staff time required for the transition, it does provide a community of professionals and other resources designed to support a 'lone arranger' and ease the implementation process as much as possible.

ARCHIVES WEST ORBIS CASCADE ALLIANCE

ABOUT CONTACT HELP

Search results for Southern Oregon University, Hannon Library

Document(s) 1 to 6 (of 6) 10 | 25 | 50 | All

Search  DIGITAL OBJECTS ONLY

Search by Keywords  >

Refine by keywords  >

Refine Search:

**REPOSITORY**  
Southern Oregon University, Hannon Library (6)

**PLACES**  
Ashland Or. (1)  
Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, Montana (1)  
Indians of North America-- Northwest, Pacific (1)  
Northwest, Pacific (1)  
Rogue River National Forest (Or. and Calif.) (1)

**NAMES**  
Martin, Douglas D., Dr. (Douglas Dale), 1943-2000 (2)  
Anderson, Alvin G. (1)  
Cummings, Anita Bailey (1)  
Duncan, George (1)  
Foster, H. D. (Harold Day) (1)  
More...

**SUBJECTS**  
Indians of North America-- Northwest, Pacific (2)  
Forests and forestry (1)  
History, Local (1)  
Medicine (1)

**MATERIAL TYPES**  
Diaries (2)  
Maps (2)  
Computer disc (1)  
Local histories (1)  
Personal narratives (1)  
More...

**Collection Title: Douglas D. Martin papers**  
Repository: Southern Oregon University, Hannon Library  
Summary: Douglas D. Martin was a long-time member of the Western History Association and a recognized scholar of Native American/white relations. Dr. Martin published widely. Dr. Martin's areas of specialty included the socio-cultural history of the United States, the history and literature of the American frontier, American environmental history, and Indian-White relations in American history. This special collection contains 16 boxes of manuscript materials relating mostly to Native Americans in the Northwest. Box 15 in the collection contains various small objects, such as arrowheads. While most of the donation consisted of monographs that were added to the Library's holdings, the collection also included manuscript materials described within this document.

**Collection Title: Francis G. Swedenburg papers**  
Repository: Southern Oregon University, Hannon Library  
Summary: Francis Swedenburg was one of the many Swedish immigrants to settle in Oregon. He began his medical career in March 1907 at the Ashland Sanitarium, joining the founder of the sanitarium, Dr. Joseph Herndon. He became a prominent member of his field. The collection consists of 34 journals spanning 1890-1937, a doctor's call book, a record book, and twelve family photographs, clippings, financial documents, and other miscellanea.

**Collection Title: Ashland Creamery records**  
Repository: Southern Oregon University, Hannon Library  
Summary: Ashland Creamery Company Articles of Incorporation, 1896. Stock certificates with valuations of 5, 10, 15, 20, or 30 shares at \$10 per share, 1897.

**Collection Title: Margery Bailey scrapbook and diary**  
Repository: Southern Oregon University, Hannon Library  
Summary: A scrapbook compiled by Margery Bailey during her undergraduate years (1910-1914) at Stanford University, and Bailey's 1963 diary, kept during the last months of her life.

**Collection Title: Rogue River National Forest records**  
Repository: Southern Oregon University, Hannon Library  
Summary: Jeffery LaLande worked as an independent historian outside of his Forest Service career, and this collection resulted from his independent research. These papers include correspondence with researchers on various topics; files from essays, articles, book reviews, and books he has written; and his peer reviews, requested by various editors, of manuscripts submitted for publication.

Management of a standalone environment exceeds Hannon Library's capabilities. The Orbis Cascade Alliance eliminates the need to go it alone. The Alliance provides significant technical and administrative support, including best practices and standardization. Archives West developed their program with the intention of providing support to the consortia members. As noted in a 2013 article, "the program supports a suite of collection management and access services that allow participating institutions to focus local staff and resources on other functions. Members also find an active community of colleagues to consult and



play a substantial role in governing and directing the program” (Allison-Bunnell, Morton-Keithley, & Knight, 2013). At the consortium level, Archives West develops policies and procedures regarding the management of record and manuscript collections. Each individual archive can build on or adapt the broad, consortia-level policies and procedures to fit their specific needs. A small archive with a lone arranger, like SOU, does not need to reinvent the wheel. They can merely adjust the existing resources to meet their needs.

The screenshot shows the Archives West website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'ARCHIVES WEST' and 'UNIVERSITY OF OREGON ALLIANCE' logos, and links for 'ABOUT', 'CONTACT', and 'HELP'. A search bar is located on the right side of the header. Below the header, the main content area is titled 'Oregon Shakespearean Festival publications, 1935-present'. On the left, there is a 'Table of Contents' sidebar with links for 'Overview of the Collection', 'Historical Note', 'Content Description', 'Use of the Collection', 'Administrative Information', and 'Names and Subjects'. The main content area provides an 'Overview of the Collection' with the following details:

- Com:** Otness, Harold M.
- Title:** Oregon Shakespearean Festival publications
- Dates:** 1935-present (Inclusive)
- Quantity:** 10 linear feet, (19 boxes)
- Collection Number:** MSS.036
- Summary:** The collection consists of miscellanea relating to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, including production information, membership, and public relations materials, playbills, clippings, articles, and programs.
- Repository:** Southern Oregon University, Hannon Library  
Hannon Library, Special Collections  
1250 Siskiyou Blvd  
Ashland, OR  
97520  
Telephone: 541-552-6841  
libspec@sou.edu
- Access Restrictions:** The collection is open for research.
- Languages:** English

Below the overview, there are sections for 'Historical Note', 'Content Description', 'Use of the Collection', 'Administrative Information', and 'Names and Subjects', each with a 'Return to Top' button.

### Enhance Discovery

Recently, Hannon Library has examined processes for improving the discovery of materials to support students’ academic research. Opening the finding aid for each SPEC collection and performing a keyword search requires a high level of perseverance. Novice researchers and undergraduate students find the process frustrating and may abandon their search. The Archives West site allows researchers to search the contents of all collections through search options similar to the library’s catalog. A contents search enables researchers to locate materials regardless of whether the collection’s main subject or description appears related to their research needs. For example, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival manuscript collection contains a few items related to the local weather that may be of interest to a researcher of regional climate change. Another collection that focuses on forestry includes poetry authored by the forest rangers which may interest students studying creative writing. The ability to search across the contents of all collections improves the likelihood that researchers will efficiently locate materials relevant to their needs (O’English, 2011). Mark O’English further noted that researchers who locate finding aids through search fields similar to Archives West



spend significantly more time with the document as compared to accessing a finding aid through the library catalog (O'English, 2011). Usability testing by the Alliance notes that searchers "seem to prefer aggregator sites that offer access to as many materials as possible; they are less enthusiastic about sites that offer only selected materials, or materials focused on a particular subject" ("Orbis Cascade Alliance Northwest Digital Archives Digital Program Planning," n.d.). Participation in Archives West will improve the discoverability of our collections and assist student researchers, facilitating student success and related employment skills.

### **Improve Collection Management**

Hannon Library and SPEC staff identified improvements in collection management as an essential benefit of joining Archives West. Participation in Archives West includes the option to utilize the ArchivesSpace collection management system. The opportunity to move collection management from a series of Excel and Word files to a system as robust as ArchivesSpace should not be underestimated. Permanent staffing of SPEC consists of less than .5 FTE. SPEC also employs five student workers and the occasional intern. SPEC's documentation concerning accessioning, processing, and donor information required multiple Excel sheets and Word files. SPEC also needed overarching documentation designed to track revisions, notes on future processing, prioritization, and deaccessions. ArchivesSpace centralizes these functions and adds efficiencies to the daily workflows. For example, staff and students no longer need to consult multiple documents to gather information concerning a collection. It also reduces the likelihood that information will be recorded in the wrong document or not at all.

Participation in Archives West further streamlines workflows such as entering and updating donor information. When a person donates multiple collections, the donor's information will be attached to each accession and collection. The automation alleviates the need for SPEC staff to locate, update, and reenter information in multiple places. In addition, the descriptive standards emphasized by Archives West comply with DPLA standards far better than our legacy finding aids. Use of these standards also improves SPEC's ability to coordinate with digital projects at Hannon Library. Materials selected for digitization and described according to Archives West standards will require less remediation by SPEC's staff. Reducing remediation creates workflow efficiencies for the digitizing team.

### **Promote Growth and Sustainability**

The streamlined workflows gained through participation in Archives West and use of ArchivesSpace allow SPEC staff the time to develop and solidify plans for long-term growth and sustainability. For Hannon Library, long-term sustainability includes addressing a growing collection that will require added physical space and preservation of the AV materials already in SPEC. Opportunities for growth include the incorporation of born-digital materials and the technology, skills, and space needed to sustain them. Each of these activities requires staff time to identify the essential resources and to build a network of key supporters crucial to sustaining SPEC well into the future.



Efficiencies in collection management workflows enable SPEC staff to expand their engagement in advocacy activities. The ability to build and strengthen relationships with donors, supporters, upper management, and other stakeholders is key to SPEC's growth and long-term viability. Staff time spent on inefficient processes can now be directed toward increasing relationship-building activities. Currently, SPEC uses several communication tools to reach out to various stakeholders, such as newsletters, social media, and our web page. Streamlined workflows also allow staff members the time and opportunity to assess these activities. Are these communications reaching the intended audience and are they effective? Can SPEC better align these activities with their goals? For example, SPEC currently employs social media and the web page to promote discovery and awareness of our services and collections to potential researchers. Are these activities successful? How might they be improved? Additional time created through improved workflows also enables SPEC staff to expand the current outreach activities and explore new avenues. Identifying the most effective actions assists SPEC in improving communication and ultimately, the ability to build relationships and advocate for its long-term growth and sustainability.

Aside from improved workflows, the Archives West website facilitates promotion of the member archives. The Archives West site is professional, user-friendly, and aesthetically pleasing. As such, it provides an excellent tool for SPEC to employ when approaching potential donors and supporters. Donors want their materials to have a full and accurate description while being easily discoverable. The opportunity to view the Archives West website and explore other collections from SPEC as a demonstration of how their collection may appear is a critical factor in the donor's decision. The site also works as a showcase for SPEC and its collections. Presentations of the Archives West website allow potential supporters to learn about SPEC and its place in the larger archival community. The website enables SPEC to effectively demonstrate its current participation level in conjunction with short-term and long-term goals. The Archives West website is well designed for these types of presentations.

### **Conclusion**

SPEC benefits from the support that membership in Archives West provides in a variety of ways. Archives West enables SPEC to expand the discoverability, collection management, and promotion of our services beyond anything we could accomplish alone. By design, Archives West transfers "some functions and services from local staff to the network level" (Allison-Bunnell et al., 2013). The opportunity to expand SPEC's capabilities while maintaining the current staffing levels was essential in our decision to join. Archives West provides the framework which improves the workflow efficiency of our small archive today and allows staff to work toward our vision of the future SPEC. A fundamental part of these plans includes developing a broad base of support across all stakeholder groups to facilitate SPEC's continued growth. In leveraging our membership in Archives West, SPEC can engage a robust community to build support for expanded services and increased staffing.

Our initial experiences with Archives West were overwhelmingly positive. The training sessions have been informative and practical. The Alliance performed the initial set up of ArchivesSpace. Decisions regarding any customizations are ongoing and will be decided collaboratively within Hannon Library. SPEC is currently transitioning to ArchivesSpace.



As expected, transferring our legacy records, particularly description records, requires substantial time and effort. The decision to join Archives West has already resulted in a sizable monetary donation to facilitate the transition, as well as the donation of an extensive collection of papers. Resource records will become available in Archives West during Fall term 2019. Hannon Library looks forward to completing our transition and taking full advantage of all the opportunities membership in Archives West provides. 

### References

Allison-Bunnell, J., Morton-Keithley, L., & Knight, E. (2013). Build it—and advocate for it—and they will come: Lessons from a collaborative project in archives advocacy and program development. *Journal of Western Archives*, 4(1). Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/westernarchives/vol4/iss1/9>

O’English, M. (2011). Applying web analytics to online finding aids: Page views, pathways, and learning about users. *Journal of Western Archives*, 2(1). Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/westernarchives/vol2/iss1/1>

Orbis Cascade Alliance Northwest Digital Archives digital program planning: Researcher needs study report on findings. (n.d.). Retrieved November 27, 2018, from ResearchGate website: <https://tinyurl.com/yyhvh9gu>



# Sharing Oregon's Cultural Heritage: Harvesting Oregon Digital's Collections Into the Digital Public Library of America

by **Julia Simic**

Assistant Head of Digital  
Scholarship Services,  
Digital Production  
and Preservation  
University of Oregon Libraries  
[jsimic@uoregon.edu](mailto:jsimic@uoregon.edu)

and

**Ryan Wick**

Analyst Programmer,  
Oregon State University  
Libraries and Press,  
The Valley Library  
[ryan.wick@oregonstate.edu](mailto:ryan.wick@oregonstate.edu)



JULIA is the Assistant Head of Digital Scholarship Services at the University of Oregon Libraries. Her primary areas of responsibility include the management of all stages of the digital lifecycle, and participation in initiatives related to digital collections and scholarship projects. Julia assisted in developing training for the Orbis Cascade Alliance's LSTA grant to become a DPLA Service Hub and is the Institutional Representative to the Unique & Local Content Team. She holds a BA and MLS from Indiana University.



RYAN is an Analyst Programmer at Oregon State University Libraries and Press, with both the Special Collections and Archives Research Center and the Emerging Technologies and Services department. Beginning as a student worker in 1999, he has been involved in many digitization and digital collections projects, including publication of The Pauling Catalogue, OSU Sesquicentennial Oral History Project, ScholarsArchive@OSU, and Oregon Digital. He is also active in the Samvera and Code4Lib communities.

*Oregon Digital, the library digital collections platform of Oregon State University and the University of Oregon, joined the Mountain West Digital Library (MWDL) and the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) in 2016 to increase the visibility of our collections. This article discusses the process of becoming participants in the hub-network structure of the two organizations, remediating metadata in compliance with best practices, and modifications to the digital collections platforms, both locally and at MWDL, to successfully harvest over 100,000 items into DPLA.*

## Background

Oregon State University and the University of Oregon have a longstanding and successful collaboration in providing access to unique digitized cultural heritage materials. Utilizing expertise from both institutions, Oregon Digital (n.d.) was launched in 2009 as a joint project on CONTENTdm, and later migrated to the Samvera (formerly Hydra) (n.d.) platform. Oregon Digital provides a single point of access for over 450,000 items in 116 discrete collections. Among our regional partners are the Greater Western Library Alliance, the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, the Oregon Arts Commission, the Oregon Historical So-



ciety, and many others. In 2015, about a year after we migrated our collections to Samvera, we began to explore participation in the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) (n.d.) as a way to share and promote our collections beyond the state of Oregon. DPLA member repositories make their digital collections metadata available for OAI-PMH harvesting. DPLA aggregates that metadata and makes it public and searchable through their interface. Actual content, such as images and documents, are not harvested; users clicking on an item in the DPLA interface are redirected to the original repository item. Partnering with the Mountain West Digital Library (MWDL) (n.d), a service hub for DPLA, was a natural extension of the collaborative spirit of both institutions.

### Preparing Collections for Harvest

Although we began reviewing our digital collections for compliance with DPLA and MWDL content and metadata standards in late 2015, Oregon Digital officially joined MWDL as a single member repository in 2016. MWDL, based at the University of Utah, has a long relationship with DPLA, participating in the foundational Digital Hubs Pilot Project between 2012 and 2015, and has built partnerships with over sixty cultural heritage institutions. Their expertise as an established metadata harvester for DPLA was invaluable in assisting the Oregon Digital team through the technical challenge of making MWDL's Primo-based harvester work with our Samvera OAI-PMH output. Oregon Digital was, in fact, their first attempt at providing service to the Samvera platform, as most of their member repositories used CONTENTdm for delivering digital collections.

The screenshot shows the Mountain West Digital Library search interface. On the left, there are filters for 'RESOURCE TYPE' (Images: 16,390; Text: 2,450; Collections: 1,363; Sounds: 195; Movies and Animations: 25), 'COLLECTION PARTNER' (University of Oregon Libraries: 72,177; Oregon State University Libraries: 6,138; Oregon State Highway Department: 116), 'DIGITAL COLLECTION' (UC Athletics: 12,492; Reading Oregon: 271,805; Lee Moorhouse Photographs: 7,100; Argyle Studio photographs, 1890s-1940s: 4,349; Ken Gray Insect Image Collection: 3,230; UO Archives Photographs: 23,202; Gertrude Bass Warner Papers, 1909-1922: 235; Oregon Maps: 109), and 'SPATIAL COVERAGE' (Oregon, United States: 12,422; Multnomah County, Oregon, United States: 7,839; Multnomah Knight Arena, Lane County, Oregon, United States: 6,256; Lane County, Oregon, United States: 6,022; Marion County, Oregon, United States: 2,223). The main results area shows 1-50 of 182,276 results for 'Mountain West Digital Library', sorted by relevance. The first seven results are listed, including items like 'Male Casella, 2018' from UO Athletics and 'Ellyah Hirsch, 2017' from UO Athletics.

MWDL search results showing content from both UO and OSU.

In preparation for harvesting, metadata specialists at OSU and UO identified collections (or Sets in Oregon Digital) that could be contributed to DPLA and compared the Oregon Digital Metadata Dictionary (n.d.) to MWDL's Dublin Core Application Profile (Mountain West Digital Library, 2011), each documenting the metadata standards and fields that would be used in harvesting. Metadata remediation was necessary to meet MWDL/DPLA requirements. Some fields, such as Description and Subject were required by MWDL, but were not used always used in Oregon Digital. Other fields had incompatible data formats.



Building Oregon (Oregon Digital. Building Oregon, n.d.), one of the most popular collections from UO, contains over 4700 images photographed by former Dean of the UO School of Architecture Marion Dean Ross. Scanned from 35mm slide film, the only metadata we had about the images was what was written on the slide mount itself and what could be gleaned from its filing position in the physical collection. They lacked information appropriate for inclusion in the Description and Subject fields necessary for harvest into MWDL. To address this and similar complications in other collections, we had to take into account the subject matter and availability of staff who could add missing metadata, and the needs of the users of Oregon Digital and how they would discover the items through searching and browsing. In the end, most items were given “boilerplate,” or generally applicable Descriptions and Subjects that took minimal staff time and required little Quality Assurance.

Inconsistent metadata, particularly in the Date field, also needed to be addressed. Agreement on a single input standard between collections, even within institutions, was non-existent. Once we decided on the machine-readable Extended Date Time Format (EDTF) specification (2018) and the level of support we would provide for it, scripts were written to search out and correct the formatting with little human intervention.

Several collections had items that used separate Earliest Date and Latest Date fields with values specifying a date range. For OAI output, these were collapsed into a single range value. EDTF date ranges gave us more flexibility, and MWDL agreed to adjust Primo to handle the ranges and parse them out for date values and facets. MWDL also knew that other partners were interested in using EDTF and Oregon Digital could serve as a pilot effort. This proved to be more involved than first anticipated, partly due to staff transitions, but ultimately was resolved with data normalization rules.

Compound or Complex Objects were also a challenge. These were used heavily by UO to represent physical archival folders, and at OSU to display items such as oral histories, audiovisual materials, and sometimes documents such as scrapbooks that have individual page descriptions. They manifested in Oregon Digital as parent metadata records to which child item records with content files were related. In early harvest tests both the parent and the child records were taken, resulting in some confusion in MWDL’s Primo instance and their public search interface. After conversations with MWDL, we decided to make only parent records available for harvest by adding a metadata field, Primary Set, which functioned directly as the OAI Set and was applied to records selected for harvesting.

Oregon Digital makes heavy use of RDF and linked data. Fields such as Type and Rights were recorded in Oregon Digital metadata records as Uniform Resource Identifiers (URIs) that needed to be translated into text for the MWDL harvester. Record text labels are not stored in Fedora, so they were instead pulled from the Solr index and returned in OAI records. In a few cases, our label formatting was different than what was expected by MWDL. Our Region and Location labels, built from GeoNames (n.d.), separated the hierarchical levels with ‘>>’ (i.e. Corvallis >> Benton County >> Oregon >> Pacific Northwest), but MWDL wanted commas as separators to match DPLA’s metadata requirements. In our OAI specific code we could adjust the labels after they came out of Solr and leave Solr data as it was, not affecting the main Oregon Digital site.



### Test Load

Five test collections were submitted to MWDL's Required Data Checker (Mountain West Digital Library, 2014) after metadata remediation. This tool, first provided as part of the DPLA OAI Aggregation Tools and modified to meet the requirements of MWDL's Dublin Core Application Profile, gives item-level feedback on the presence of metadata in required fields. We used this feedback as the final step of Quality Assurance for metadata remediation of the test collections, and cleaned up anything we missed earlier. When that was completed, an initial harvest of these collections was performed, and technical difficulties, including with the OAI provider response, could be addressed. Simultaneously, remediation began on more collections for harvest.

### Required Data Checker - Simple Dublin Core

Check incoming oai\_dc for required data for Mountain West Digital Library.

Submit
✕

**African Political Ephemera and Realia Project**  
[https://oregondigital.org/oai?verb=ListRecords&set=oregondigital:african-ephemera&metadataPrefix=oai\\_dc](https://oregondigital.org/oai?verb=ListRecords&set=oregondigital:african-ephemera&metadataPrefix=oai_dc)

Record	Required Fields Missing	Recommended Fields Missing
oai:oregondigital.org:african-ephemera/6395w7085		Language Coverage
oai:oregondigital.org:african-ephemera/9593tv13c		Language
oai:oregondigital.org:african-ephemera/dn39x152w		Language
oai:oregondigital.org:african-ephemera/gx41mh844		Language
oai:oregondigital.org:african-ephemera/nk322d32h		Language
oai:oregondigital.org:african-ephemera/8623hx748		Language
oai:oregondigital.org:african-ephemera/8623hx748		Language

MWDL's Required Data Checker reviewing one of our collections.

OAI support was provided by adding the Ruby OAI gem (Code4Lib, 2015) to the Oregon Digital Ruby on Rails application, integrating OAI commands and responses. A few small parts of code from the gem were overridden in our application based on MWDL/DPLA metadata requirements. One instance of this was modifying the OAI record identifier code to return a value that included the collection or Set identifier in it; this is used by Primo to determine the OAI Set in the item record. Another example was modifying the OAI XML result to not include any empty metadata fields.

Our first implementation of OAI in Oregon Digital did a full lookup of items from our Fedora backend when requested, in order to return all of an item's metadata for processing. An OAI ListRecords request to show 100 items could take a minute or more to return a

response. For a full harvest, this would obviously not scale, and harvesting a single collection would take several hours. We changed the code to pull metadata and labels out of our Solr index instead, as this already powered the Oregon Digital public user interface, which was much more performant.

Providing thumbnail images for harvest also required configuration. Our images are stored on disk in folders that are organized based on parts of the item pid (permanent identifier). While this is consistent and reproducible, it didn't make sense to try and implement the folder rules in an external program. We built a new Rails controller in the Oregon Digital application to handle thumbnails when another system only had the item pid value. An image request with the pid value resolves and returns the correct thumbnail URL. This allowed MWDL's Primo to use a thumbnail template for any item harvested.

The screenshot shows the DPLA search results page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links like HOME, BROWSE BY TOPIC, BROWSE BY PARTNER, EXHIBITIONS, PRIMARY SOURCE SETS, MY LISTS, ABOUT DPLA, NEWS, and DPLA PRO. Below this is the DPLA logo and a search bar with the text "Search the collection". The search results are displayed as "138 results" with options to sort by "Relevance" and items per page "20". There are filters applied: "partner: Mountain West Digital Library", "provider: Oregon State University Libraries", and "type: text". A "Refine your search" sidebar on the left shows filters for Type (text: 138), Subject (College students: 138, Universities and colleges--Periodicals: 138, College yearbooks: 111), Date (Between Year and Year), Location, Contributing Institution (Oregon State University Libraries: 138), and Partner (Mountain West Digital Library: 138). The main content area shows a list of items with thumbnails and titles: "The Beaver 1978" (Oregon State University, Vol. 72), "Education Pays, July 1920" (Oregon Agricultural College), "The Trail Blazers, June 1915" (Oregon Agricultural College), and "O.A.C. and U.S.A., June 1918" (Oregon Agricultural College). Each item has a "View Full Item" link.

DPLA search results showing OSU publications.



## Conclusions

Preparing and configuring our OAI endpoint and results took more work and time than was initially expected, but we knew it was important and necessary to get right. Furthermore, because we had full control of our application, we could make all of the changes that were needed, including making our legacy content better. Our initial goal was getting content into DPLA and MWDL, but there are other aggregators, including the Orbis Cascade Alliance, that we have worked with in the past and may again in the future.

The screenshot displays the DPLA interface for a specific item. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links like 'HOME', 'BROWSE BY TOPIC', and 'SEARCH'. Below this, the item title 'PH037\_b090\_S00256 Angelus Studio Photographs' is prominently displayed. A thumbnail image shows a historical scene of a crowd on a bridge. To the right of the thumbnail are buttons for 'Cite this item' and 'Add to a new list'. Below the image is a 'View Full Item' button. The metadata section is organized into fields: 'Created Date' (1880/1949), 'Description' (a detailed text description of the photograph), 'Partner' (Mountain West Digital Library), 'Contributing Institution' (University of Oregon Libraries), 'Subjects' (a list of related terms like Nature, Trees, Waterfalls, etc.), and 'Location' (Multnomah Falls, Oregon).

DPLA item view with thumbnail and metadata.

Our partnership with MWDL has also led to participation in community efforts beyond the Orbis Cascade Alliance. Metadata librarians participated in the Western Name Authority File Project (Myntti & Neatrou, 2016), a pilot for creating linked open data name authorities for regionally significant people, and the Bulk Digitization Interest Group, a place to share standards and technical infrastructure for large-scale digitization projects. Our technical work has also contributed to the Samvera open source community. Developers actively participate in the Samvera Metadata Interest Group, the Applied Linked Data Interest Group, and in Samvera application development.



As members of the Orbis Cascade Alliance, OSU and UO have worked with the Digital Collections in Primo Group and the Dublin Core Best Practices Standing Group of the Unique and Local Content Team, assisting in preparing the Alliance itself to become a DPLA Service Hub. The experience we gained from participation in MWDL and DPLA has greatly benefited us and our sister institutions, and provided a valuable opportunity to grow our knowledge and practice of digital collection building. 

### References

Code4lib. (2015, May 8). Code4lib/ruby-oai. Retrieved June 10, 2019, from <https://github.com/code4lib/ruby-oai/>

Digital Public Library of America. (n.d.). Retrieved June 10, 2019, from <https://dp.la/>

Extended Date/Time Format (EDTF) Specification. (2018, October 22). Retrieved June 10, 2019, from <https://www.loc.gov/standards/datetime/edtf.html>

GeoNames. (n.d.). Retrieved June 10, 2019, from <https://www.geonames.org/>

Metadata Task Force of the Digitization Committee of the Utah Academic Library Consortium. (2011, July 20). Mountain West Digital Library Dublin Core Application Profile. Retrieved June 10, 2019, from [https://mwdl.org/docs/MWDL\\_DC\\_Profile\\_Version\\_2.0.pdf](https://mwdl.org/docs/MWDL_DC_Profile_Version_2.0.pdf)

Mountain West Digital Library. (2011, July 11). Mountain West Digital Library Dublin Core Metadata Application Profile. Retrieved June 10, 2019, from [https://mwdl.org/docs/MWDL\\_DC\\_Profile\\_Version\\_2.0.pdf](https://mwdl.org/docs/MWDL_DC_Profile_Version_2.0.pdf)

Mountain West Digital Library. (2014, May). DPLA OAI Aggregation Tools 1.0. Required Data Checker - Simple Dublin Core. Retrieved June 10, 2019, from [http://dpla-aggregation.sandbox.lib.utah.edu/reqdata\\_checker/index\\_oai\\_dc.php](http://dpla-aggregation.sandbox.lib.utah.edu/reqdata_checker/index_oai_dc.php)

Mountain West Digital Library. (n.d.). Retrieved June 10, 2019, from <https://mwdl.org/>

Mynntti, J., & Neatrou, A. (2016, May 17). Western Name Authority File Project. Retrieved June 10, 2019, from <https://sites.google.com/site/westernnameauthorityfile/>

Oregon Digital. (n.d.). Retrieved June 10, 2019, from <https://oregondigital.org/>

Oregon Digital. Building Oregon. (n.d.). Retrieved June 10, 2019, from <https://oregondigital.org/sets/building-or/>

Oregon Digital Metadata Dictionary. (n.d.). Retrieved June 10, 2019, from <https://tinyurl.com/y3zypmpr>

Samvera: An open source repository solution for digital content. (n.d.). Retrieved June 10, 2019, from <https://samvera.org/>



# Surveying Oregon's Digital Heritage Collections

by **Beth Dehn**

Oregon Heritage  
Commission Coordinator,  
Oregon Heritage  
[beth.dehn@oregon.gov](mailto:beth.dehn@oregon.gov)



BETH is the coordinator for the Oregon Heritage Commission, a group of leaders from across the state who work collaboratively to champion resources, recognition, and funding for preserving Oregon's past. The Heritage Commission is part of the Oregon Heritage division of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and works as a catalyst and coordinator for organizations in the state that gather heritage and make it available to the public. Beth previously worked at Washington County Museum, the Museum of Natural & Cultural History, and taught internationally. She holds an MA in Folklore from the University of Oregon with a Museum Studies Certificate.

*In 2018, the Oregon Heritage Commission conducted a survey of heritage organizations across the state to capture data regarding digitization efforts. The goal of the survey was to collect a baseline of information on the types of digital collections in Oregon, existing digital infrastructure, and a level of interest in collaborative options. Data gathered was shared with our partners, including the Orbis Cascade Alliance, to aid their work in considering how to create an on-ramp for smaller collections to enter into the Digital Public Library of America. This work followed the 2013 Environmental Scan of Digital Collections conducted by the State Library of Oregon and the outcomes of the 2015 Northwest Digital Summit, which identified overall gaps in support for digital collections at heritage organizations in Oregon and Washington. Unlike previous statewide assessments, the 2018 survey strove to capture data from heritage organizations of all types and sizes, both with and without digital collections, so that the Oregon Heritage Commission and our partners can determine strategies, tools, and trainings to best assist organizations at all stages of the digitization process.*

## **Methodology of Survey**

The 2018 Survey of Digital Heritage Collections in Oregon was open from February 15 through April 30, 2018 and was distributed via electronic link through emails, Listserv announcements, and social media. Approximately 440 paper copies of the survey were sent to heritage organizations with a self-addressed, stamped return envelope. Oregon Heritage Mentors, who are trained professionals that volunteer their time to provide technical assistance to heritage organizations, utilized their regional networks to encourage participation in all corners of the state. Sixty-two surveys were returned via mail.



For the purpose of the survey, digital collections were defined as cultural heritage materials that have been scanned (like photographs, postcards, court records, or letters) or that originate in digital form (like digital photos or oral histories recorded digitally). Digital collections include the type of content you'll find in Washington Rural Heritage and Oregon Digital. They do not include published digital content (like eBooks).

### Who Responded?

The results of the survey included responses from 178 organizations of varying size and sophistication. The majority of responders were museums and libraries, followed by historical societies, genealogical societies, and government agencies. Other responders included a public garden, a historic cemetery group, and nonprofits formed to preserve historic houses. Of those who responded, 128 organizations reported that they have digital collections, and 114 of those organizations are either currently digitizing their collections or have digitized collections in the past. This indicates that 64 percent of responding organizations have some level of infrastructure in place to complete digitization work.

### What Did We Learn?

The majority of Oregon's cultural heritage organizations, large and small, are dealing with digital collections. Some are actively digitizing while others are caring for digital collections that have been donated to them. All together, we estimate these collections account for 231,000 to 580,000 digital heritage objects in the state. Photograph and textual collections account for the largest portion of digital objects, but moving images, artifacts, and artwork are also prominent.

- **PRIORITIZING ITEMS TO DIGITIZE:** Overall, organizations recognize digital collections are a way to preserve material of importance and value. Prioritizing items to digitize is mainly driven by significance to the mission of the organization (57 percent), as well as the need to preserve materials that are fragile and deteriorating (53 percent). Many organizations also indicated that available grants are a driving factor in determining what collections to digitize.
- **TRAINING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS:** Survey results indicate that heritage organizations have limited training when it comes to digitizing. Responders reported that over half of their collections staff and volunteers (56 percent) have no training in collections care. While many of the larger organizations that are digitizing their cultural heritage collections rely on professional experience, the smaller organizations rely on knowledge gained at workshops and trainings, as well as materials found online.
- **EQUIPMENT:** The type and quality of equipment used by organizations to digitize collections are varied. Many organizations own or have access to a scanner and photo editing software (99 percent and 86 percent respectively). The vast majority also report having access to digital storage, including a combination of hard drives, servers, and



cloud storage. Only about half of responders report access to audio conversion and audio editing software.

- **METADATA:** This survey recorded little about metadata standards, other than whether or not organizations are creating metadata. Survey takers were asked if their collections have metadata (defined as descriptive information that explains and locates the file) which can be used to retrieve digital items. Only 40 of 114 organizations with digital collections responded, which indicates the question was either unclear or that many organizations are not creating metadata. Of the 40 organizations that responded, 28 said they do have metadata, six said they don't, and six were unsure.
- **ONLINE ACCESS:** Of the 128 organizations with digital heritage collections, 42 report their collections are available online to the public. Institutions are utilizing a variety of systems to place their collections online including Past Perfect Online, CONTENTdm, web pages, and various social media platforms such as Flickr, and Facebook. Our partners at Orbis Cascade Alliance noted that only nine of those online collections have public-facing systems that offer digital collections in a structured way that can interface with other systems. Past Perfect software is commonly used by museums, however, the system presents difficulties harvesting metadata for aggregation.
- **ORGANIZATIONS NOT DIGITIZING:** Of the 50 organizations that responded without digital collections, 45 expressed an interest in digitizing. Organizations that aren't digitizing are largely choosing not to due to lack of staff and volunteer capacity. A common theme in survey comments is, "We are all volunteers without training," and "Older volunteers don't like to use computers" (Q24, Comments 6 & 9). Other organizations acknowledge that turnover in volunteers is a huge set-back, "One of the big problems for small organizations is continuity of knowledge; one person learns how to participate, then when they leave it's hard to pass on the knowledge" (Q33, Comment 18).

### Interesting Trends

Several trends emerged from the survey responses. One is that heritage organizations see providing public access to collections as a priority. However, when asked for the top three goals in creating or acquiring digital collections, access was second to preservation. We are curious to follow up with responders to understand what access means to them and how they view online digital items as access points to their collections. There may be opportunities to reframe how heritage organizations think of access in general.



# Digital Heritage Collections in Oregon

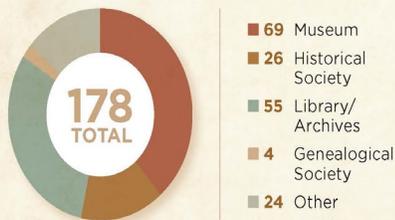
A survey of digital heritage collections in Oregon was conducted by the Oregon Heritage Commission in 2018 with funding from the Oregon Cultural Trust. Information gathered from the survey will be used to identify training opportunities and potential statewide solutions. This is a snapshot of some of the results that were captured.

## Big Picture Data



**WELL OVER 231,000**  
digital items exist in heritage organizations in Oregon

## Type of Organization that Responded



## Organizations with Digital Collections



## Interest in Digitizing Collections



Of the 50 organizations without digital collections, the majority expressed interest in digitizing.

- **45** Interested in digitizing
- **5** Not interested in digitizing

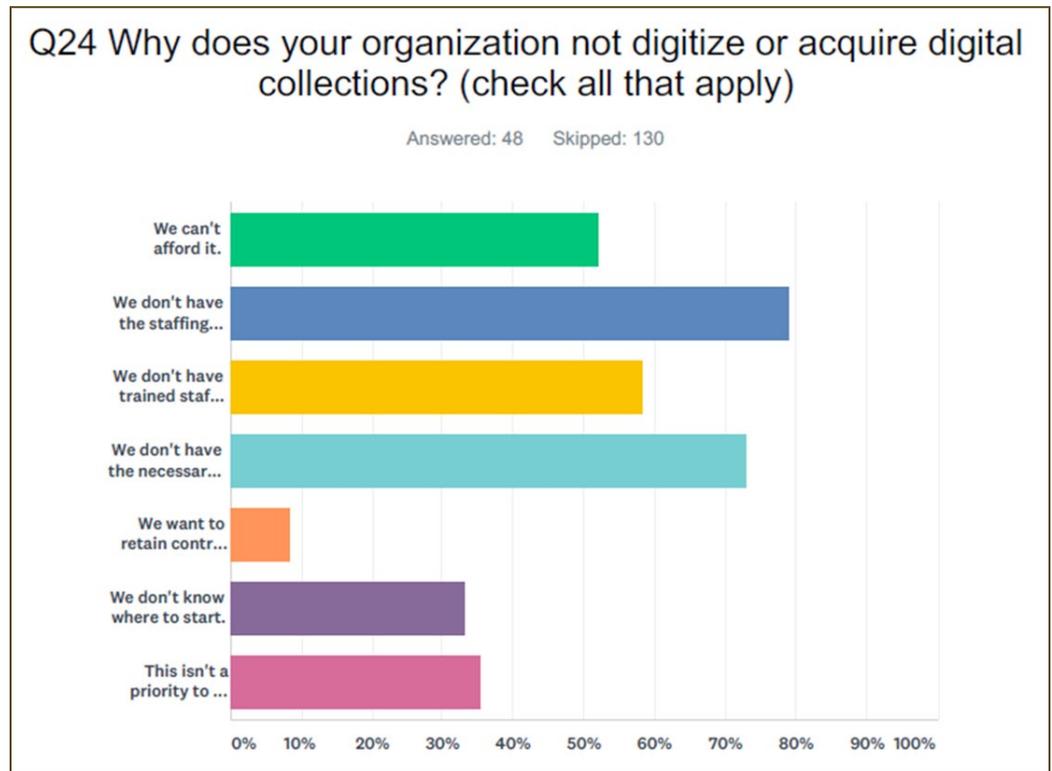
## 42 Digital Collections are Available Online



## Types of Digital Collections



A pleasant surprise for Oregon Heritage staff was that our assumption that heritage organizations feel a sense of ownership about their collections as a reason not to digitize was disproven by the results. When asked why organizations don't digitize or acquire digital collections, the lowest percent (less than 10 percent) responded that it was because they want to retain control of the content. This reflects a noted change in staff's previous experience working with small heritage organizations. Rather, the barriers to digitizing fall in line with constraints of staff time, expenses, and prioritization.



While organizations didn't reflect a desire to retain control of content as a reason not to digitize, a clear concern that emerged in survey comments was that many heritage organizations rely on revenue from the sale of their digital images, and they don't want online access to restrict their ability to sell images. The seven organizations that expressed this concern were genealogical societies, small historical societies, and a rural public library. One responder wrote, "Some of the board is concerned about losing the opportunity to raise money for copies of our digitized photos if we have a cooperative venture" (Q31, Comment 3). Another responder wrote, "My organization is strict about maintaining revenue opportunities since we charge for access to our digital materials" (Q31, Comment 23). Collaborative partnerships must take this concern into account and educate groups about the quality and use of access images.



### With Collaboration in Mind

The final section of the survey was designed to gauge interest in a variety of collaborative options that have been discussed by statewide partners. One set of questions asked survey takers for their level of interest in collaborative options for *digitizing* collections. The second set of questions asked their level of interest in collaborative options for *providing online access* to digital collections. Responders generally expressed interest in both areas. In response to digitizing, the majority were in favor of a loan system where equipment could be checked out and used for brief periods of time. A close second was interest in a “hub” where you could bring items to be digitized by someone else. The idea of a regional hub with shared equipment was less well received. Geographic distance and the cost of transferring items were referenced as barriers for some to participate in this type of collaboration.

For online access, a majority of responders were interested in the idea of contributing digital items to a more localized online system, either university-driven or a regional collaboration, rather than national. Organizations made clear that they are looking for trustworthy partners in collaboration. Several responders simply felt more comfortable with the materials staying in the community. One responder wrote, “We need collaborative options for making collections available online because we can never afford to have and maintain online collections ourselves. However, we want people to find us and be aware of us, for their support as members/donors or future visitors. So perhaps the further away from our location and community the materials go, the less visible we feel as a community resource” (Q31, Comment 46). Smaller organizations also want content available on their website in addition to a local repository. One survey responder wrote, “I want the records to be available at least locally, but the more people who have access the better” (Q31, Comment 1)!

### Conclusion

The 2018 Survey of Digital Heritage Collections in Oregon documents a snapshot in time of existing digital heritage collections. A clear finding is that cultural heritage organizations in Oregon are actively digitizing their collections and have expressed an interest in working collaboratively. As a follow-up to the survey, the Heritage Commission is reaching out to individual organizations for more information and will continue to create basic tools and trainings that will be available through the Oregon Heritage MentorCorps program.

The Heritage Commission shares the results of our survey with our partners and the library community in order to continue seeking collaborative solutions for stewarding Oregon’s heritage collections, particularly looking to larger repositories to assist with the preservation of and access to smaller heritage collections. We know that small heritage organizations house unique collections that tell the story of our state. We also know that many small organizations do so with limited resources of time and money. The issue of capacity is well summed up by this survey comment, “We are great at digitizing, but it comes at the expense of our other collections work” (Q33, Comment 81). *For a complete copy of the results, contact Beth Dehn.* 

### References

Plumer, D.C. Oregon State Library. (2013). *Oregon’s digital collection: Recommendations for statewide coordination and collaboration for digital collections projects*. Salem, Oregon.



Plumer, D.C. Oregon State Library. (2015). *A Report from the Northwest Digital Collections Summit. Salem, OR, March 20, 2015*. Salem, Oregon. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/y4p6up7o>

Survey of digital heritage collections in Oregon. (2018). Unpublished. Retrieved from <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/OHC/Pages/Digital-Heritage-Collections.aspx>



# Building and Navigating a Path to Collaborative Digital Platforms for Oregon's Libraries:

## There are Many Ways to Get There

**by Arlene Weible**  
Electronic Services Consultant,  
State Library of Oregon  
[arlene.weible@state.or.us](mailto:arlene.weible@state.or.us)

and

**Ross Fuqua**  
Data & Federal  
Programs Consultant,  
State Library of Oregon  
[ross.fuqua@state.or.us](mailto:ross.fuqua@state.or.us)



ARLENE is the Electronic Services Consultant and Oregon's Federal Regional Depository Coordinator at the State Library of Oregon. She has held a variety of positions at the State Library and previously worked on the development of Oregon's state government publications digital collections. She has been a government information librarian for 27 years and has held positions at libraries in CT, WA, TX, and Oregon.



ROSS is the Data & Federal Programs Consultant at the State Library of Oregon. Before planting roots in beautiful Salem, he worked as Digital Engagement Librarian for Washington County Cooperative Library Services (WCCLS), and served as Digital Projects Librarian for the Washington Rural Heritage program at the Washington State Library. Ross has also worked on several audio digitization projects and has contributed to a number of oral history and radio documentary efforts. He has a MLIS from University of Washington and a MA in Folk Studies from Western Kentucky University.

*Over the last several years, the State Library of Oregon has explored options and supported a variety of projects to promote collaboration among libraries to build and sustain Oregon digital collections. Activities such as hosted meetings, grant funding, and pilot projects have identified both opportunities and roadblocks to collaboration, especially for Oregon's small public libraries. A clear and distinct path has proven to be somewhat elusive, and the journey itself has demonstrated that a one-size-fits-all solution is unlikely to emerge soon. Multiple pathways to a more robust digital collections platform may not only be inevitable but preferable, given the diversity among the travelers and the complexity of the map. This article will describe the State Library's efforts to support digital collections in the state and what may be on the horizon for improving access and collaboration.*

### Background

The State Library of Oregon has a long history of funding digital collections projects through its Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Competitive Grants program.



While some of these successfully funded projects have established ongoing, collaborative partnerships among institutions (such as the Southern Oregon Digital Archives and Washington County Heritage Online), other projects have found sustainability and achieving broader access through better discovery platforms to be a challenge.

State Library staff and members of the LSTA Advisory Council sought to improve decision-making around grant awards by creating more specific guidelines and promoting best practices. The Council also commissioned a report that would assess current and potential models for projects that could assist with prioritizing LSTA funding around digital collections.

In 2013 Danielle Plumer conducted an environmental scan and report with recommendations. The goal was to identify project models, assess these projects' adherence to digitization and metadata standards, review existing models for collaboration at both the state and multi-state level, and advise on how the State Library could provide support for digital collection activities that would align with the goals of Oregon's LSTA Five-Year Plan (2013–2017).

Plumer's scan and subsequent report documented a large number of projects and activities across the region but also identified a lack of support and infrastructure for smaller Oregon institutions interested in developing digital collections. A variety of stakeholders identified the need for further discussion around potential collaboration and organized a meeting in March 2015. This Northwest Digital Collections Summit meeting also generated a set of recommendations. Below is a summary of the recommendations from Plumer's initial report and the subsequent summit meeting. The documents with the detailed version of these recommendations can be found at <https://libguides.osl.state.or.us/digitalcollections>.

- Adopt digitization and metadata standards for all future LSTA-funded digital collection projects.
- Provide training on topics related to digitization and digital projects.
- Explore options for statewide repository of Oregon digital content for institutions unable to maintain separate repositories.
- Support existing local and regional collaborative digitization projects, as well as existing statewide newspaper digitization programs.
- Encourage institutions in Washington and Oregon to form one or more initial collaborative project(s) focused on eventual participation in the Digital Public Library of America.

These recommendations laid out avenues for the State Library to explore, but did not recommend a specific model or approach to building a statewide repository/platform for smaller libraries that do not have the resources to build this infrastructure. State Library staff have continued discussions with organizations expected to provide leadership, including the Oregon Heritage Commission, Orbis Cascade Alliance, and University of Oregon. Unfortunately, leadership and staff turnover, as well as shifting priorities since 2015, has slowed any forward momentum on a specific effort to build a statewide platform available to all institutions. It has been difficult to find a model or develop a program that could meet the diverse needs of small libraries without a significant investment in staffing to provide the level of support required for a successful initiative.



While a single statewide model or program has been elusive, communication among the state organizations has continued and information sharing has been valuable as each organization considers its role in statewide efforts. This has led to a few State Library supported projects that have laid groundwork for more collaborative efforts.

### Standards and Training

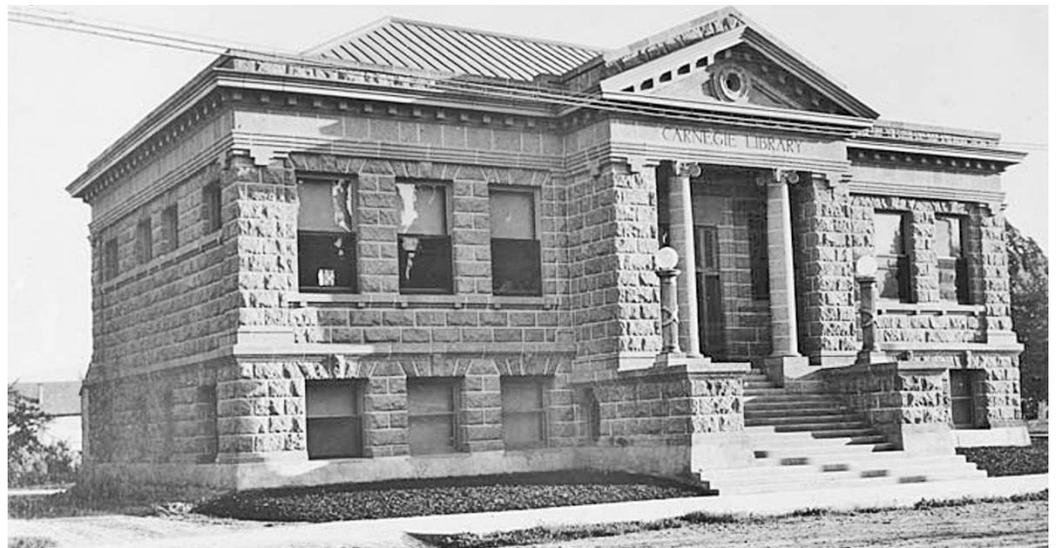
Requirements for meeting basic digitization and metadata standards for all digital collection projects funded by the State Library's LSTA Competitive Grant program were added to the FY2016 grant application and have been used to assess projects in each subsequent year.

The Orbis Cascade Alliance secured two years (2016–2017) of LSTA Competitive Grant funding to build capacity for digital collections metadata cleanup, training, and support. They created training materials for metadata cleanup helping the Alliance to be in a better position to become a regional hub for DPLA. While focused on Alliance members, the standards and training tools developed have been useful to guide non-members in making their collections compatible with DPLA standards.

### Possible Platforms for Small Institutions

State Library of Oregon staff began talks with Washington State Library staff about possible collaboration around the Washington Rural Heritage project. The Washington Rural Heritage model has worked well for small institutions in Washington, and staff in Oregon wanted to explore ways to leverage an already existing project and infrastructure. Those talks resulted in a pilot project designed to test issues associated with bringing Oregon institutions into the Washington-based project.

For many years, Baker County Library District (BCLD) director Perry Stokes had expressed concerns about the long-term health of their existing digital collections, as well as the general lack of discoverability of the digital collections' content. With Baker County collections held within an aging, unsupported PastPerfect digital repository, Stokes and other staff and volunteers in Baker County sought to make a move to a more sustainable digital collections ecosystem.



Baker City Carnegie Library, ca. 1910. Courtesy of the Baker County Library District, Baker City, Oregon.



Starting at the end of 2017, BCLD, the Washington State Library, and the State Library of Oregon engaged in a pilot project to test the feasibility of a regional collaboration around digital collections. With enthusiastic support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the State Library of Oregon—through a basic intergovernmental agreement—directed a modest amount (\$7,000) of Oregon’s FY2017 LSTA allotment to the Washington State Library to migrate a subset of the Baker County content into the Washington Rural Heritage repository.

A total of 1,044 records (approximately 15 percent of Baker County’s complete digital collections) were migrated from BCLD’s digital archive to the Washington Rural Heritage database by Washington State Library’s Digital Repository Librarian, Evan Robb. Following the initial migration project, Robb provided a report and a set of recommendations for bringing BCLD’s digital collections in line with current metadata standards and training was provided to that end. These recommendations closely follow the Orbis Cascade Alliance’s Dublin Core Best Practices, Version 2.3, which have been tailored to enable metadata inclusion in the DPLA. Finally, Washington State Library staff provided virtual training in the use of its client cataloging software. Two BCLD staffers and one volunteer were trained in editing/cataloging records.

In general, Robb found that PastPerfect metadata can migrate to a ContentDM system, with a combination of manual and automated approaches. The experience gained from working with the software provided the project team with a better sense of the time required to enhance its metadata, and to develop localized workflows for a new era in digital collection development within its organization. The early stages of a migration project of this sort require development of a workflow, creation of new and target metadata fields, decision-making regarding carry-over metadata and transformation of legacy metadata, and integration of legacy metadata within a more extensive repository.

The experience of this pilot project has also provided the State Library of Oregon with more data and additional aspects to consider with furthering a cross-state partnership with the Washington State Library. Both state libraries and BCLD have agreed to continue a second year of migration efforts, in the hopes that a larger portion of the BCLD collections can be efficiently migrated using the existing practices and documentation.



Baker City Coronet Band, 1897. Courtesy of the Baker County Library District, Baker City, Oregon.





Sketches in Baker County, cover of booklet, 1882.” Courtesy of the Baker County Library District, Baker City, Oregon.”

### What Does the Future Hold?

While the lack of progress towards a strategic model for a statewide digital collection platform has been frustrating, it does not constitute failure. Institutions who may be in a position to provide leadership in the future have given careful attention to leveraging existing systems and potential partnerships, in order to maximize value and to avoid duplication of effort.

For now, State Library staff are doing their best to pursue opportunities and find solutions for institutions that express need. The State Library is actively pursuing opportunities to partner with Washington Rural Heritage and to fund grants to support projects that specifically assist small libraries to digitize newspaper and local history collections. The State Library’s own Digital Collections platform, implemented to help manage its Oregon Government Documents collection, may also have potential to help smaller agencies and libraries preserve and store content.

It may also make sense for the State Library to encourage and support small institutions to collaborate with the geographically-based projects like the Southern Oregon Digital Archives or format-based projects like Historic Oregon Newspapers, leveraging existing projects to help meet specific local needs.

In the end, several paths can be forged to help Oregon’s small libraries create, store, and provide access to digital collections. The State Library remains committed to working with Oregon libraries to find the best solutions for their needs. Please contact us to discuss the possibilities! 



### Further Reading

LSTA Grants (State Library of Oregon)

<https://www.oregon.gov/Library/libraries/Pages/competitives.aspx>

Southern Oregon Digital Archives (Southern Oregon University)

<https://soda.sou.edu/>

Washington County Heritage Online

<http://washingtoncountyheritage.org>

Digital Collections Resources (State Library of Oregon)

<https://libguides.osl.state.or.us/digitalcollections>

Digital Collections Documentation (Orbis Cascade Alliance)

<https://www.orbiscascade.org/digital-collections-documentation>

Washington Rural Heritage

<https://www.washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/>

Baker County Library District Digital Collections

<https://www.washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/collection/baker/>

State Library of Oregon Digital Collections

<https://digital.osl.state.or.us/>

Historic Oregon Newspapers

<https://oregonnews.uoregon.edu/>

### Photos

Baker City Carnegie Library, ca. 1910.

<https://washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/collection/baker/id/726/rec/2>

Baker City Normal & Business College postcard, 1909.

<https://washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/collection/baker/id/782/rec/4>

Baker City Coronet Band, 1897.

<https://washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/collection/baker/id/731/rec/77>

“Sketches in Baker County,” cover of booklet, 1882.

<https://washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/collection/baker/id/88/rec/2>



# OLA Quarterly Publication Schedule 2019

The *OLA Quarterly (OLAQ)* is the official publication of the Oregon Library Association. The *OLAQ* is indexed by *Library Literature & Information Science* and *Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts*. To view PDFs of issues, visit the *OLAQ* Archive on the OLA website. Full text is also available through *HW Wilson's Library Literature and Information Science Full Text* and *EBSCO Publishing's Library, Information Science and Technology Abstracts (LISTA) with Full Text*.

Each issue is developed around a theme determined by the Communications Committee and Guest Editor(s). To suggest future topics for the *OLA Quarterly*, or to volunteer/nominate a Guest Editor, contact the *OLAQ* Coordinator.

Vol./No.	Theme	Deadline	Pub. Date	Guest Editor
Vol 25 • No. 1 Spring 2019	<i>The Future Organization of Things</i>	May 15, 2019	June 15, 2019	Rachel "Ray" Zill <i>Oregon State University, Valley Library</i>

## Oregon Library Association Inc.

PO Box 3067, La Grande, OR 97850

### The OLA Communications Committee

*OLA Quarterly Editor-in-Chief*  
Charles Wood

*OLA Quarterly Editor*  
Bob Abbey  
Forest Grove City Library

*OLA Quarterly Editor*  
Jillian Coy  
Forest Grove City Library

*OLA Quarterly Editor*  
Jim Jatkevicius  
Washington County Cooperative  
Library Services

*OLA Quarterly Editor*  
Anne LaVallee  
Beaverton City Library

*OLA Quarterly Editor*  
Norma Leistiko  
Beaverton City Library

*OLA Quarterly Editor*  
Dillon Peck  
Salem Public Library

*OLA Quarterly Editor*  
Allison Reibel  
Multnomah County Library

*OLA Quarterly Editor*  
Rachel "Ray" Zill  
Oregon State University

*OLA Hotline Co-Editor*  
Michelle Lenox  
Pacific University Libraries

*OLA Hotline Co-Editor*  
Kristin Williams  
Athena Public Library

*Twitter Admin*  
Susan Davis  
Josephine Community Library

*Association Manager*  
Shirley Roberts