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Cultural Heritage Information Management Forum

Morning Session Schedule, Friday, June 5, 2015

10:15 - 11:45 AM

Organizing Cultural Materials for Access, Moderator: Heather Slania

Remembering Lincoln: Bringing Together Responses to an Assassination

David McKenzie, Digital Projects Manager, Ford's Theatre

In March 2015, Ford's Theatre launched *Remembering Lincoln*, a digital collection documenting personal, institutional, and public responses to the Lincoln assassination from around the United States and world. Learn about how Ford's Theatre brought this collection of items from over 20 institutions together. This presentation will include discussion of planning for the website, including audience research to determine user needs, outreach to include relevant items (an ongoing process), planning for different budgetary scenarios, working with disparate institutions to develop metadata standards, and web development.

IC [+] FA = Using Metadata to Reunite Photograph and Archival Collections,

Shalimar White, Manager of the Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives (Dumbarton Oaks)

As its name implies, the Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives (ICFA) at Dumbarton Oaks has a dual identity. On the one hand, there are extensive photograph collections of more than 500,000 images - including photographs, negatives, transparencies, slides, and films - of Byzantine art, architecture, and archaeology. On the other hand, there are archival collections that document archaeological, art historical, and conservation fieldwork projects at Byzantine sites throughout the former Byzantine Empire. Over the course of its 70+ year history, the two parts of ICFA's collections were initially physically separated due to format (photographs versus documents) and then reunited as one department decades later. Because the archival materials were sundered from their related fieldwork photography, much valuable context was lost. Many groups of photographs are incompletely described or lack any association with their relevant fieldwork projects.

Since 2011, ICFA staff have been engaged in a comprehensive inventory of our holdings. A crucial component of this project was the implementation of a collection management system (CMS) to serve as an integrated data repository for ICFA's mixed collections. The CMS will allow ICFA to aggregate data from multiple legacy sources, whether databases (EmbARK, OLIVIA, Microsoft Access, etc.) or paper documents (accession logs, inventories, curatorial files, etc.), thereby gaining full intellectual and physical control over our holdings. After a review of nearly 20 candidate systems, the main feature that most lacked was the ability to represent both hierarchical archival description (finding aids) and item-level image cataloging, which is crucial for ICFA's mixed photograph and archival collections. In the end, ICFA decided to adapt an open source web-based archival description software, the International Council on Archives' Access to Memory (ICA-AtOM), by developing a VRA Core plugin to create an additional cataloging template for the image records. In so doing, we will virtually reunite our image collections and fieldwork archives by using metadata to identify the intellectual connections between previously separated materials and to describe our collections for wider dissemination online.

This paper will present the problems inherent to mixed collections like ICFA's, describe the system selection process, and outline the challenges of incorporating two different metadata schemas and importing disparate legacy datasets into the same database. It will also outline the commonalities and differences in professional practice among art librarians, archivists, and visual resources professionals, particularly as relates to methods of description and collection management, and how systems and metadata can be used to integrate related collections that are often managed by different units within the same institution. In addition, the paper will describe the potential for an aggregated dataset for mixed collections to be repurposed for further online distribution, whether EAD finding aids, MARC records, EAC-CPF authority records, or SKOS taxonomies.

Saving College Radio

Eric Cartier, Digital Librarian, Digital Formatting and Media Conversion & Laura Schnitker, Ethnomusicologist and Sound Archivist, Special Collections in Mass Media and Culture (University of Maryland Libraries)

In September 2013, Special Collections at the University of Maryland opened a new exhibit entitled "Saving College Radio: WMUC Past, Present and Future," located in the Maryland Room Gallery at Hornbake Library. The title reflected a two-pronged approach in which "saving" referred to sound archivist Laura Schnitker's efforts to preserve the history of the campus radio station, as well as the importance of maintaining community support to ensure its future. While the exhibit has since closed, the ongoing preservation and stewardship of the WMUC Collection in University Archives remains a priority. The variety of materials in the collection is extensive—it includes photographs, fliers, 'zines, vertical files, correspondences and audiovisual formats—and therefore presents numerous challenges, including inconsistent metadata, use of legacy equipment and copyright concerns. The UMD libraries' Digital Conversion and Media Reformatting (DCMR) department has been integrating standard procedures with innovative approaches in order to preserve the content and make it accessible to users and alumni. This presentation will illustrate how these processes have facilitated a deeper understanding of and appreciation for college radio, while increasing the ability of the UMD Libraries to preserve and digitally steward its assets.

Developing a Web-Accessible Infrastructure for Access to Cultural Heritage Scientific Data

Fenella G. France, Chief, Preservation Research and Testing Division (Library of Congress)

The mission of the Preservation Directorate of the Library of Congress is “*to assure long-term uninterrupted access to the intellectual content of the Library’s collections, either in original or reformatted form*”. Collection content information includes scientific analyses of the collections, and the Preservation Research and Testing Division (PRTD) sustains physical, chemical and optical preservation laboratories to research and support the intellectual content and preservation of all collection materials. Since information in the Library is public domain access to this scientific content should be available to any researchers who require it. To support this goal PRTD developed the Center for Library Scientific Samples – Digital (CLASS-D), originally an open source software architecture platform utilizing a customized resource description framework (RDF). This would enable international access to data with data interoperability; standardized file formats and enable transfer and archiving of digital data for research and analysis by the curatorial, scholarly, preservation and cultural heritage communities. The creation of a database that integrates scientific data and cultural heritage requires a linkage to be maintained between the original object that contains a wealth of knowledge stored contextually, and the new digital content that “represents” the object. This visualization interface for documents termed “scripto-spatial” links the new “digital cultural object” with scientific data essentially a spatial information system, or document “google-map”.

Prototype Database Development for the CLASS-D Initiative: Initial Architecture for Object Metadata

Joseph Koivisto, Department of Library and Information Science, Catholic University of America

The Library of Congress’s Center for the Library's Analytical Scientific Samples – D initiative (CLASS-D) seeks to establish a publically accessible database for the capture and dissemination of conservation data gathered through a variety of laboratory assessments performed by the Preservation Research and Testing Division. In order to further the initial project work and to prove the feasibility of such a resource, a prototype database architecture was developed to house the object metadata of CLASS collection materials include bound materials, magnetic tape, paper, fiber, and more. Prototype development was complicated by the heterogeneous nature of the identified resources and design considerations for future development stages. Despite these difficulties, the initial design of the CLASS-D database prototype was completed during the summer of 2014, paving the way for subsequent architecture development and future dissemination of PRTD’s analytical findings.