January 4th Meeting Recap

Seattle Area Archivists met at Seattle University’s new library and archives facility for a tour and presentation by Mary Sepulveda, the library’s coordinator of collection development. SU has an impressive collection of materials, is a member of NWDA (and has a number of finding aids available online), and boasts a brand new archival storage space complete with a roomy processing area and research room. The archives’ number one challenge, said Sepulveda, is that the university hasn’t created a position for, or hired an archivist.

For more information on SU’s archives and its participation in NHPRC’s grant-funded project “Building and Supporting Emergent Archival Programs in the Northwest,” see Elizabeth Knight’s article on page 12.

member snapshot

This section introduces you to your SeaAA colleagues, one member at a time. Send suggestions to SeaAA

CAITLIN OIYE, PHOTOGRAPH AND DOCUMENT COLLECTIONS MANAGER, Denshō: The Japanese American Legacy Project

What is Denshō? The organization’s mission statement really says it all: “Denshō is a nonprofit organization started in 1996, with the initial goal of documenting oral histories from Japanese Americans who were incarcerated during World War II. This evolved into a mission to educate, preserve, collaborate and inspire action for equity. Denshō uses digital technology to preserve and make accessible primary source materials on the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans.”

What prepared you for your position with Denshō? I finished my graduate degree in History, Archives and Records Management from WWU in 2008 with the defense of my final research thesis which focused on Japanese American Internment photographs, archives, and the construction of memory. From 2008 until January 2012, I worked as a project analyst with King County’s electronic records management project.

My work with Denshō allows me to combine my professional knowledge and experience with something that speaks to me on a personal level in terms of its broader societal mission and goals. I’m excited to be back in the world of collections management and archives.

Why do you like archives?: I like the anticipation you feel before opening an unprocessed box for the first time. You never know what you might find.

If you couldn’t be an archivist, what would you be?: I’d probably be a librarian, hopefully working with young adults. I’m currently working toward a master’s degree in library and information science through the online MLIS program at San Jose State University.

Do you have a favorite young adult book you would recommend to SeaAA members? That’s a hard question to answer; I have so many. The Hunger Games Trilogy by Suzanne Collins, Jellicoe Road or Finnikin of the Rock by Melina Marchetta, and Nick and Norah’s Infinite Playlist by David Levithan and Rachel Cohn (to name a few).
News from the Board

Membership report
The 2011-2012 SeaAA membership drive began November 1, 2011. Welcome to SeaAA, new members! To read more about three of our new members in their own words, visit page 16.

Notes from the Treasurer
SeaAA has begun sending e-mail receipts for member registrations and renewals.

Board Election
SeaAA’s current Chair and Vice-Chair have served their two years, so we’ll be bidding Jennifer Hawkins and Seth Dalby adieu in the spring. Thank you both for all that you’ve done for SeaAA!

This means we’re looking for two new Board members. Interested? E-mail SeaAA your self-nomination, or nominate a colleague for this position.

Education and Events

Next SeaAA meeting
Mark your calendars: the next SeaAA meeting is scheduled for July 12, 3:00 pm at Providence Archives. More details will be available on our website as the date approaches and we’ll send reminder e-mails.

Solutions roundtables
SeaAA’s first Solution Roundtable focused on audiovisual materials. Hannah Palin and John Vallier from the UW joined SeaAA members to offer practical tips and to answer specific questions related to A/V materials on February 29 at the College Inn Pub. For detailed information on A/V preservation and access provided by John and Hannah, visit pages 18-20.

Managing Electronic Records in Archives and Special Collections
SeaAA will be hosting a training workshop: Managing Electronic Records in Archives and Special Collections on May 10-11 at the Seattle Municipal Tower, room 1650. SeaAA members receive a discount of $25. Contact SeaAA for the promo code or if you have any questions.

REGISTER before April 11 to receive early bird rates!

Electronic Records Online Course
In addition to the two-day onsite course (above), SeaAA will host a more basic online course offered as a part of SAA’s Digital Archives Specialist curriculum this spring or summer. Stay tuned for more information.

Networking meet-ups
SeaAA will launch a series of networking meet-up events this year. The purpose of each meet-up is to explore specific archives-related themes and topics with other SeaAA members. Meet-ups will be held at a café/restaurant and will focus around a central topic. Examples of topics include: archival advocacy, the meaning of archives, archives and democracy, and archival training and education. Networking meet-ups offer members a forum for informal archives-related discussions. Look for our upcoming e-mail on networking meet-ups.

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seattle.area.archivists@gmail.com
Archival Magnetism:
UW Libraries’ Puget Sounds Project

by John Vallier

Archival collections are rarely sexy. There’s dust, mold, metadata conventions, ISO standards, copyright entanglements, and agreement forms that force donors to confront mortality. And each format we aim to archive brings with it an additional mash-up of preservation ills. In the world of sound recording collections we find vinegar syndrome, binder disintegration, bleed-through, sticky shed, needle dig, chemical residue, and crazing. Amorous, these are not.

Though rarely sexy, some archival sound recording collections do emanate magnetic auras that are not merely confined to a tape recording’s oxide particles. Their contents speak, bear witness, pull and engage us in ways that text and images cannot do. What follows is a brief overview of what I believe are examples of such engaging, if not comely, collections. While each collection is distinct—representing a unique slice of musical reality—together they share a common connection: all are part of the University of Washington Libraries’ Puget Sounds Project.

Crocodile Cafe Collection – Looking for 120 continuous-days, of unique live recordings from Seattle’s Crocodile Café? This collection contains exactly that. Recorded at the Café between May 2002 and December 2007 by audio engineer Jim Anderson, these recordings document performances by a legion of artists, both notable and obscure. From indy rock to punk, freak folk to noise, hip-hop to shoegazer, soul to ska, math rock to americana, the collection captures numerous memorable and energetic performances. Whatever your opinion of a particular band, the crystalline quality of the recordings is a testament to the audio engineering prowess of Mr. Anderson. More information, including samples, are available online: http://tinyurl.com/croco-uw

Bob Nelson NW Folk Music Collection – Anglo-American folk music has a long and rich tradition in Seattle and the surrounding Puget Sound region. Bob Nelson, a retired carpenter and co-director of the Pacific Northwest Folklore Society, has been an active participant in this scene, performing and recording at local folk music hoots for nearly 60 years. In 2010 Nelson began digitizing hundreds of unique recordings—both ones he made and others donated to him—while adding deep metadata like only one with an emic perspective can do. In 2011 he began gifting these recordings to the UW Libraries, where they filled a void in the Puget Sounds project. Notable artists in the collection include John Ashford, Ed Bremer, Patti DiLudovico, and Walt “Dean of NW Folk” Robertson (Robertson recorded two albums with Moses Asch for his Folkways Records). As we work out permissions and copyright issues, we add more and more of these recordings to the collection’s site: http://tinyurl.com/nelson-uw

Photo: Josh Zimmerman
Kearney Barton Collection –
Music historian Peter Blecha writes: "Seattle's Kearney Barton is the man whose audio engineering work can be credited with forging the powerful aural esthetic that became widely known as the 'original Northwest Sound.'" Indeed. You can hear Barton's tube-powered and Bauhausian analog sensibility at work on recordings by such bands as The Frantics, Playboys, Little Bill, Kingsmen, and Sonics. In 2010, thanks to a grant from the American Music Partnership of Seattle, we were able to extract (quite literally) these recordings and many, many more, from Barton's basement. The collection, which consists mostly of ¼ reel-to-reel tape and dates back to 1955, reflects the diverse nature of Barton's career. Yes, early NW rock peppers its contents, but so do opera, jazz, folk, and uniquely NW genres (e.g., accordion-infused Scandinavian novelty songs). Rare gems discovered so far include songs by a pre-Heart Ann Wilson, serious soul from Black on White Affair, and in-your-face funk recorded for Quincy Jones' Gula Matari Records (some say Jimi Hendrix's first recording is buried somewhere in the collection: we are still looking). Samples and a search engine for the collection are available @ http://tinyurl.com/barton-uw

A/V QUESTIONS ANSWERED
John Vallier and Hannah Palin served as SeaAA's resident experts at our inaugural Solutions Roundtable on February 29 at the College Inn Pub. Thirteen members gathered to hear practical advice on caring for audio and video recordings. Since Vallier and Palin had prepared information and answers to questions gathered from members before the meet-up, it made for a productive and lively discussion. In case you missed it, Palin and Vallier sent us excellent A/V information and resources which we've included on pages 18-20. Thank you, John and Hannah!

The success of this event means that we'll be planning another Solutions Roundtable in the near future. If you have topic suggestions, please send them to SeaAA.
We’ve all seen nineteenth-century photographs in antique shops or museums. Some of us are lucky enough to have them in our repositories or better yet, in our homes. But how they were created is foreign to many of us because of the ease and ubiquity of digital photography these days. As we inundate our personal hard drives and social media accounts with hundreds and possibly thousands of digital images, we give very little thought to how we got to the point where almost every mobile phone has the ability to take digital photographs that can be instantly sent to friends all over the world.

This digital deluge stands in sharp contrast to the tactility, complexity, uniqueness, and relative exclusivity that characterize the daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, and tintypes of 150 years ago.

As archivists, most of us have at least a rudimentary understanding of how to identify, preserve, and store nineteenth-century photographs, but rarely if ever do we give more than a passing thought to the complex processes and equipment that led to their creation. Archival literature on preserving early photography is similarly short on details, which is too bad, because I think that understanding these photographic processes, however minute, might help us more effectively preserve and describe historical photographs for our constituents.

This occurred to me last spring when I got a rare opportunity to witness (and take part in) the creation of a set of authentically “photographic” ambrotypes. It all began with Tom Skerritt. Yep, in case you’re not familiar with 80s pop culture, he’s the actor who played “Viper” in the movie Top Gun. A photo portrait of Skerritt appeared on a June 2011 cover of the Stranger newspaper.

“GEEKING OUT” ARCHIVIST STYLE

by Josh Zimmerman
Two things struck me about it: the image edge seemed unclean, and Skerritt’s distant expression contrasted with the sharp detail of his facial features; it reminded me of early photographs I had seen in archival collections and museums, so I did some research and found out that the artist, Daniel Carrillo, creates tintype, wet-plate ambrotype, and daguerreotype portraiture in the back of a Pioneer Square frame shop.

I contacted Carrillo immediately, eager to book an appointment for a portrait in order to witness the process first-hand.

The timing couldn’t have been better. My wife’s birthday was just around the corner, and she and I had often talked about how great it would be to do actual “old time” photography, not just the faux version (with hackneyed bar scene backdrops and lace-up costumes) we’d seen in seaside towns and county fairs. I would have loved to have had our infant son, Maxwell, join me, but he never would have been able to sit still, and would have ended up a ghostlike blur in the finished plate, more scary and disconcerting than cute and thoughtful.

When I walked into Carrillo’s studio on the day of the shoot, he was polishing five glass plates on his table. For his portraits, he uses 8 x 10 glass quarter inch plates, though historically ambrotypes were usually smaller and available in a number of sizes. Since an ambrotype is a direct negative, the finished plate is reversed (base exposed) to protect the fragile emulsion, and backed with black paper or lacquered glass to produce the positive image. Studios would often enclose the plate in a decorative case of wood, metal, and velvet, called a union case.

As Carrillo set up, I worried about not being able to sit still for the extended period of time required for proper exposure. Thankfully, it was an unusually sunny day in Seattle, so Carrillo explained that the exposure time wouldn’t be as long as it usually was. Relieved, I began documenting my 19th-century portraiture experience with my very own modern-day pictorial documentation device: my iPhone.

I felt I had to explain my enthusiasm, so I told Carrillo that I was an archivist and familiar with ambrotypes, but excited to see the historic process from start to finish. He was more than happy to let me “geek out,” as he put it.

Carrillo wasted no time. Before I could snap a photo, he was in his darkroom, surrounded by its orange glow. Silver nitrate is sensitive to blue tones which it renders light in the ambrotype’s finished plate. Reds and yellows
become dark, almost black, so the thin orange stripes on my plaid jacket didn’t materialize in the final product.

In the darkroom, I watched Carrillo add the collodion mixture (gun cotton, ether, and alcohol) to the plate with one hand and tilt it from left to right to ensure its full coverage. After returning the excess collodion to the bottle, he added the plate to an opaque black box that contained silver nitrate, the light sensitive material that adheres to the tacky collodion.

He closed the lid to the box and from there we headed out to position me for the shoot and maneuver the bulky 8 x 10 Century Master Studio camera equipped with a gigantic lens.

Carrillo uses a psychedelic tie dye of blues and purples as a backdrop for his photo shoots. Picking up on my surprise at such a brightly colored background, he assured me this would be rendered light in the process. The camera has no shutter release button and no flash; Carrillo uses large pieces of white mat board to adjust and reflect the light.

After I had settled on my first pose, he wheeled the massive camera into position, peered out from the back of the camera hood, removed the cartridge, told me to sit still, and rushed to the darkroom with the cartridge to retrieve the sensitized plate.

To start the exposure, he simply removed the lens cap and counted: one Mississippi, two Mississippi, three Mississippi. Done.

Retreating back to the darkroom, he pulled the plate from the cartridge and placed it in yet another black box, this one with a clear Plexiglass front. This particular box, Carrillo explained, contained a mixture of ferrous sulphate, acetic acid, and 190 proof alcohol which removed the excess silver nitrate, stopped the development, and fixed the image. Almost instantly, I could see the image materializing in front of me; first the highlights and then the midtones. After removing the plate from the box, he did a quick water wash so we could take a better look. Then he held the plate under running water for ten or so minutes in order to ensure that all developing solution was gone. Finally, he took the photograph to the front room and placed it on a hot plate to dry. I could hear what sounded like the glass cracking, but he assured me that it wouldn’t.

We repeated this lengthy process four more times trying different poses: sitting, standing, hand in jacket (think Napoleon), and hand on the table. After he shot, developed, and dried all four plates, he gave them a protective coat of lacquer which smelled strongly of lavender. When my wife opened her gift two months later, the smell was still there.

From my perspective, the plates turned out really well. The final product has a very different feel than the kinds of “photos” we’re all familiar with today. In the close-up portrait above, you can clearly see my facial imperfections, of which there are many, and which are normally hidden by regular light sources. You can even see where I cut myself shaving the previous night.
When I finally presented the ambrotypes to my wife for her birthday, she described them as “haunting.” But she absolutely loved them and insisted that we do a full family shoot, including our now fully mobile son, which will be tricky at best. It might have to wait until the return of the sun (or when our son masters his sitting still skills, whichever comes first).

Aside from being downright fun, watching Carrillo manually develop an image with very little electricity demonstrated to me just how far photography has come in the past century and a half. If “the past is a foreign country,” as the English writer L.P. Hartley suggested in his novel, *The Go-Between*, then this experience allowed me to take a quick vacation to a strange past where they did “things differently.”

My glimpse into historic photograph processes also showed me that the tools and technologies that we create, in turn, create us. From glass plate negatives of the Grand Canyon in the late nineteenth-century to JPEG images of Tahrir Square taken on a smart phone yesterday, these technologies have drastically altered the way we view, document, and remember ourselves, as well as the world around us.

The wet plate collodion process enabled multiple paper prints to be made, thus turning a largely personal and unique item into a mass produceable commodity. With the help of railroads, photographers penetrated rarely traversed corners of America exposing eastern audiences to “hidden” cultures and landscapes of the west. If these early forms of photography were partly responsible for a shrinking world, then the digital camera (and images it produces) can be blamed for completely collapsing time and space. These new digital technologies have re-tribalized us into one big global village where disparate and far flung information is instantly accessible. As a result, we pay very little attention to the barrage of images around us.

I usually advocate for archivists to exploit archives by showing how archival material can enrich the lives of users in very practical and everyday ways. The experience Carrillo offers may not seem like the most practical or broadly appealing excursion, but apparently peoples’ interests in it aren’t as rare as you may think. Carrillo said many of his clients are curious about the ambrotype process and he gladly shows it off; it’s part of the whole experience.

There will always be people who jump at the opportunity to see demonstrations of *the way things were*. Blogs like *My Daguerreotype Boyfriend* give audiences a chance to ogle attractive men of bygone eras while at the same time reminding (or even introducing) visitors to historic collections and old photographic formats.

As much as we want to distance ourselves and our profession from obscurity, curiosities, and other marginal niche interests (and the stereotypes that inevitably accompany them) the fact remains that our collections contain what many see as “old curiosities” with broad appeal.

Archivists can and should continue to tap into this public interest in old things. Today, historic photographic processes can be easily (though imperfectly) replicated using digital tools such as Photoshop or *Hipstamatic*. The mimicry and manipulation of images through these programs represents one of the highest forms of photographic flattery, and betrays a popular sense of yearning for authenticity and obscurity (a yearning to which I, myself, fully admit). If this nineteenth-century technology has become popular and “artsy,” as Carrillo’s success seems to suggest, then we as archivists can try to harness that interest by embracing our inner geeks and showcasing the curious contents of our collections for the communities we exist to serve. ★
The Gay Rights Movement and the City of Seattle During the 1970s:
A Digital Document Library at Seattle Municipal Archives

by Jonathan King

During the decade of the 1970s, gay rights issues repeatedly found their way onto the municipal agenda.

At the decade’s start, members of the city’s gay constituency began developing a public profile after decades of life hidden from public view.

Concentrated on the area surrounding the modern Capitol Hill neighborhood, these groups formed a core around which a constellation of gay-centered businesses and establishments grew, initiating the area’s long-standing reputation as the center of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) life.

In addition to a place to live, work, and play, this mobilization enabled gay and lesbian activists to gain a new prominence in City politics. In 1973, LGBT activists successfully lobbied the City Council to pass
the Fair Employment Practices Ordinance, prohibiting job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. A similar victory came in 1975 with the inclusion of sexual orientation in the protected categories of the City’s Open Housing Ordinance, which made discrimination on that basis by landlords and home-owners illegal.

Continuing legal victories in the City Council paralleled Seattle’s jubilant new celebration of an annual Gay Pride Week. Started in the summer of 1973, the events surrounding Pride Week were growing larger and better attended, culminating in the first Gay Pride March scheduled for 1977. In a highly controversial act, Seattle Mayor Wesley Uhlman officially proclaimed the week of June 25 to be Gay Pride Week.

This resulted in several demonstrations, and a flood of correspondence both pro (“With tears in my eyes, thank you”) and con (“I cannot help but feel you are planting corrupt seeds in the minds of children”).

The controversy persisted into 1977, with the vote on Initiative 13. Spurred on by the recent passage of anti-gay rights edicts by popular referenda in Miami, Wichita, and Minneapolis-St. Paul, the Seattle-area organization Save Our Moral Ethics (SOME) successfully rallied sufficient public support to place an Initiative on the November ballot that would remove sexual orientation from both the Fair Employment Practices and the Open Housing Ordinances. The city’s LGBT community likewise mobilized its political base to lobby against its passage, and, after a fierce, year-long campaign, two-thirds of Seattle voters said “no” against the Initiative.

Visit the Seattle Municipal Archives website to learn more, and experience the collection first-hand. ★
Please join me in welcoming Seattle Pacific University, Seattle University and the University of Puget Sound to the archives community!

Over the past two years, the archives programs at these three universities received a significant boost as a result of their participation in “Building and Supporting Emergent Archival Programs in the Northwest,” a National Historical Publications and Records Commission-funded grant project. The grant, totaling $123,188, was awarded to the Orbis Cascade Alliance, a consortium of 36 academic libraries in Washington and Oregon and is being administered through the Northwest Digital Archives.

The grant has provided each of the seven participating institutions* with an on-site Consulting Archivist for a total of six weeks each to provide intensive training in creating EAD-encoded finding aids and catalog records, as well as training in archival standards and best practices, program development, advocacy and outreach.

"The NHPRC grant activities have helped to lay the important foundational work to build a sustainable and often-used University Archives at Seattle Pacific," said Adrienne Meier, University Archivist at Seattle Pacific University. "Through the grant, the SPU Archives have been able to begin making finding aids available online; supply information and images to departments and users on- and off-campus; and display archival materials at campus events such as Homecoming and Class Reunions. There is now a new awareness of the Archives among the SPU community as a result of the grant activities."

"This program has provided support not only with the organization and management of our archives, but has also increased awareness about the importance of preserving our institutional history and opened the eyes of faculty, students, and staff on campus and in the local community about the potential that unique primary resources have in teaching, learning, and institutional pride," said Jane Carlin, Library Director at the University of Puget Sound.

Local Emerging Academic Archives Get a Boost from NWDA and NHPRC by Elizabeth Knight

Alexander Hall, shown here in an undated photo from the early 20th century, is the oldest building on Seattle Pacific University’s campus. Built in 1891, it is now on the National Register of Historic Places. Seattle Pacific University Archives http://spu.edu/library/archives.aspx
Seattle Pacific University, Seattle University and the University of Puget all have rich collections of institutional history that, among other things, document the important role the Free Methodists, Jesuits and the Methodist Church, played in the development of higher education in the region. In addition, each institution also has manuscript collections of historical value.

Seattle University holds one of the largest collections of materials on the Montessori Method and Maria Montessori. Seattle Pacific University archives includes the papers of Charles W. Peterson, the inventor of the Musicone Speaker. University of Puget Sound is home to the Abby Williams Hill Collection. Hill was a painter and social activist who lived in Tacoma and is recognized for her paintings of the North Cascades and Yellowstone National Park. All three universities have extensive historical photograph collections spanning the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

And according to Mary Sepulveda, Coordinator of Collection Development for Special Collections at Seattle University’s Lemieux Library and McGoldrick Learning Commons, "We have realized enormous benefits from our participation in the NHPRC project including guidance from a consulting archivist, tangible program plans and an archive manual. Overall, I believe the most significant realization for us is being allowed to shift our emphasis from archival processing to focusing on delivering products that promote outreach and user discovery. We are very proud of the finding aids and marvel at the visibility of our previously hidden content on the NWDA website!"

Participants in this project will be hosting the NHPRC Grant Forum on Advocacy on March 22nd prior to the Orbis Cascade Alliance Council meeting at the University of Oregon. Project participants will also be presenting at the Northwest Archivists/Oregon Heritage Conference in Salem, OR, this April. The grant project concludes in June 2012.

More information

- NHPRC grant project
- Northwest Digital Archives
- Seattle Pacific University Archives
- Seattle University archives program
- University of Puget Sound Archives

*The other participating institutions are Concordia University, George Fox University, Linfield College, and Pacific University, all of which are in Oregon.

Students by the College of Puget Sound Log Post outside the Kittredge Hall Student Center, January 1949, prior to final exams for the fall 1948 semester. A Sound Past, image collection. University of Puget Sound.

Biographical Note: Elizabeth Knight, MLIS, CA, is currently working as Consulting Archivist for the Northwest Digital Archives on the NHPRC-funded grant project described in this article. She is also working as Archivist in Residence at the University of Puget Sound and as Consulting Archivist for the Pacific Northwest Railroad Archive in Burien. ★
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES
Stephen Hussman
Central Washington University had been without an archivist for over 3 years until I came on board on September 1, 2011. Since I have been here, we have made some very significant progress in reducing the backlog and bringing the program back online after its long hiatus. Our major goal for the present is to join the rest of our colleagues in NWDA in getting our collections encoded and online accessible. We have also been fortunate in acquiring some student and graduate help. I was even able to convince a member of the History department faculty to assist in processing collections. I am very grateful for the support.

We have received a grant from the Lounsbery Foundation, in order to create an initial inventory of the films and recordings maintained by the Chimpanzee and Human Communication Institute located on the CWU campus. The film and videos document the human interaction with chimpanzees and the communication process (much of it through American Sign Language-ASL). Courtney Paddick, a recent graduate of CWU's MA in History program is currently our project archivist responsible for that ongoing work.

Additionally, we have received a grant from the CWU Foundation-Student First in order to process the papers of Dr. Eva Greenslit Anderson. Greenslit-Anderson received a PhD from the University of Washington in 1937, and later went on to become a scholar, educator, and Washington State legislator. She was well remembered for her pioneering efforts in supporting women in politics, education, and rights in the work place.

We are overhauling our website in order to make it more user friendly and generally easier to navigate. Our website may be seen at: http://www.lib.cwu.edu/Archives-Special-Collections

SEATTLE MUNICIPAL ARCHIVES
Anne Frantilla
Over 1,000 scanned images and associated catalog records were added to the available online images in February 2012. Included are images from Seattle City Light from 1961 and 1968, including billboards promoting the use of electricity, displays at various venues.

City Light events from the 1950s are included in another set of images, including a March of Dimes dance at Newhalem, advertising, and employee events.

SMA Participating in IMLS National Leadership Grant
The Northwest Digital Archives (NWDA), a program of Orbis Cascade Alliance, received a National Leadership Grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services to develop a tool that allows users to search for primary sources across institutions, combining digital assets and all associated description and metadata. The search results will allow researchers to get information on getting copies, contact information, and access to the digital object, if there is one.

The design process for developing this discovery tool for digital content in context for archives is user-centered and enables input from users to be incorporated into the design at several places during the creation of the tool.
All NWDA institutions will be involved in the pilot. Eight Core institutions, including SMA, will be closely involved with design of the user experience and in evaluation activities. The grant concludes in March 2013.

NWDA provides enhanced access to archives and manuscripts materials at thirty-seven institutions in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Alaska.

LAKESIDE SCHOOL ARCHIVES
Leslie Schuyler
Lakeside Archives will welcome graduate student in WWU’s History, Archives and Records Management program, Odette Allen, as its first intern this April. Allen will begin her 500-hour internship on April 18. Her work will focus on processing collections from beginning to end (from initial survey, to arrangement, preservation, and description).

The archives recently purchased a dedicated server to store its digital assets and house Archon software. Hopefully Allen will be able to describe the collections that she processes using Archon so that these finding aids (the archives’ first!) will be available and keyword searchable online.

Lakeside School’s facebook page will begin using the social media site’s new timeline tool to highlight significant historical events since the school’s founding in 1919. Beginning April 3, the site will launch its “50 Milestones in 50 Days” countdown, adding one historical event to the timeline each day until this year’s reunion party on the 8th of June, 2012. It’s a great use of social media. Soon we’ll be tweeting the launch of the countdown, which seems like a great way to get our community engaged in the school’s history and archives.


One post on Lakeside School’s facebook timeline. Image courtesy Jane Carlson Williams ’60 Archives at Lakeside School.
WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

JESSICA GIMSE

I am currently a prospective student for the University of Washington's MLIS fall 2012 cohort. My goal is to pursue a graduate degree with a focus in archival and preservation management. I have worked in both administrative and communications capacities in the non-profit industry for the last seven years, and in 2010 earned a B.A. in Social Sciences from UW. I currently volunteer with several area organizations including NARA and MOHAI. I'm excited to get to know the members of SeaAA and find out more about the excellent work going on in the community, as well as meet and learn from experienced professionals passionate about their work.

RICK BLOCK

My name is Rick Block. I am the new Metadata Librarian at Seattle University. I have been at Seattle University for a little over a year. I grew up in Milwaukee (yes, I'm a cheese head!) and lived on the east coast for the past twenty years (in Boston and New York). I am very happy to be on the best coast in beautiful Seattle. I still pinch myself that I live in such a beautiful and fantastic city. My previous position was Head of Special Collections Metadata and Cataloging at Columbia University. I have also worked at Brandeis University, Marquette University, Boston College, Tufts University, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. I taught cataloging and metadata at the library schools at Pratt Institute and Long Island University and continue to teach online for the Palmer School of Library and Information Science at Long Island University. I am teaching a course titled Principles and Practice in Archival Description: DACS and EAD. I am not a trained archivist (those who can't do, teach!) but I've always felt like I'm a closeted archivist. I have been having a great time creating finding aids and MARC records for our archival materials with my wonderful colleagues Mary Linden Sepulveda and Jeff Winter. I'm finally getting used to the hills of Seattle and found the flattest walk to campus. I am very excited to be a part of the archival community in Seattle and look forward to meeting all of you.

STEPHEN HUSSMAN

I was born in Portland, but grew up in Dayton, Ohio, home of the Wright Brothers. I always enjoyed history and wanted to make it my career. After obtaining a BA in History, I heard about the Public History Program at Wright State University in Dayton and received my MA, went back much later to receive my MLS from the University of Arizona. I have been around a bit in my career, one could say I am a "journeyman archivist." I was drawn to the Pacific Northwest by other archivists such as Larry Landis, Rand Jimerson, and Tony Kurtz. NWA and Seattle Area Archivists are great groups and I wanted to get involved!

I have been an archivist for 22 years, and most recently was Head of Archives and Special Collections at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. I was attracted to CWU as they were interested in rebuilding their program and developing a digital presence. Much of my time is spent dealing with the backlog and working to encode our finding aids for NWDA. In addition, I also serve as the Chair of Library Services (25 percent of my time) where I supervise 11 tenured/non-tenured faculty. 75 percent of my time is spent as the University Archivist.

In my spare time, I enjoy a number of outdoor activities and spending time with my family. We also assist with rescuing Jack Russell Terriers (Jack Russell Rescue).

My wife was an Olympic soccer player, and I played semi-professionally in Austria, so the family stays busy with the local soccer scene.
Seattle Area Events

(visit our [Web site](http://seattlearchivists.org) for event updates and links to area event calendars)

### MARCH

**15th**
**MOHAI History Cafe**
7-8 pm
Roy Street Coffee & Tea, 700 Broadway Ave E

**Eastside Heritage Center at Microsoft Store**
7-8:30 pm
Microsoft Store, Bellevue Square, Bellevue

**16th**
**Center for Wooden Boats**
Third Friday Speaker: Jim Taylor (Sailing the Brigantine Yankee)
7-10 pm
CWB

### APRIL

**1st**
**Eastside Heritage Center at Microsoft Store:** Getting Around the Eastside
3-4:30 pm
Microsoft Store, Bellevue Square, Bellevue

**2nd**
Historian and journalist Daniel Okrent discusses "Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* on stage with KUOW Public Radio’s Steve Scher
7-8:30 pm
Seattle Public Library (central branch)

**7th**
**MOHAI Remembering Century 21:** Advanced Seminar
10 am-12 pm

**27th**
Rookwood Arts & Crafts Tiles: From Cincinnati to Seattle
Presented by Richard Mohr in the Leary Mansion

**28th**
Creating Beauty from the Earth: California Decorative Tiles 1910-1930
Presented by Joseph Taylor in Former First Hill Hotel

**14th**
**Building Renovation Fair at Washington Hall**
Information: [www.historicseattle.org](http://www.historicseattle.org)

**18th**
Lecture and book signing - Dard Hunter: The Graphic Works
7 pm
Seattle Public Library (central branch)

**19th**
**MOHAI History Cafe**
7-8 pm
Roy Street Coffee & Tea, 700 Broadway Ave E

**8th**
**FREE Protecting Cultural Collections workshop (part 2)**; you need to have attended part 1 on March 27

**10th**
**MOHAI Century 21 Walking Tour**
10 am-11:30 am
Seattle Center

**10-11th**
**Managing Electronic Records in Archives and Special Collections**
9 am-5 pm
Seattle Municipal Tower, 1050

### MAY

**5th**
**MOHAI Century 21 Walking Tour**
11 am-12:30 pm
Seattle Center

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**Audio Visual Resource Links**
Provided by John Vallier

**Audio**

Where to buy and repair reel-to-reel players in Seattle:
- [http://www.hawthornestereo.com](http://www.hawthornestereo.com)
- [http://condor-electronics.com](http://condor-electronics.com)

Where to get your audio digitized in Seattle:
- [http://scottcolburn.com/](http://scottcolburn.com/)
- [http://victorystudios.com/](http://victorystudios.com/)

Audio digitization best practices:
- [http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/projects/sounddirections/](http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/projects/sounddirections/)
- [http://www.iasa-web.org/category/tags/publications/tc-04](http://www.iasa-web.org/category/tags/publications/tc-04)

A great overview of audio preservation info by UW librarian John Gibbs:
- [http://guides.lib.washington.edu/AudioPreservation](http://guides.lib.washington.edu/AudioPreservation)

Syllabi for ethnomusicology archiving classes I co-taught @ UCLA with Tony Seeger and UW with Laurel Sercombe

**Video**

Video preservation (including identification) sites:
- [www.arts.state.tx.us/video/](http://www.arts.state.tx.us/video/)
- [http://www.ccaha.org/education/videos](http://www.ccaha.org/education/videos)
- [http://cool.conservation-us.org/bytopic/video/](http://cool.conservation-us.org/bytopic/video/), especially (some links may not be maintained)
- [www.filmpreservation.org](http://www.filmpreservation.org)
- [http://www.filmforever.org/](http://www.filmforever.org/)
- [http://www.amianet.org/resources/guides/fact_sheets.pdf](http://www.amianet.org/resources/guides/fact_sheets.pdf)
**Reformatting materials for best accessibility**

At this point, reformatting videotapes and transferring your film is a great idea if you have the resources. We've tried to do a kind of triage on our collections—identifying those items that are endangered or deteriorating or those materials with high research value. I've just had to come to terms with the fact that it's not all going to get done and that we're doing the best we can.

So far, our workflow has been to transfer our film to a DigiBeta master with DVD access copies. While we can't gain access to the master (we don't have a deck at our disposal) it is a great format with a low compression rate, is quite stable, has been widely adopted in the preservation and production communities, and should have a decent shelf life—my personal guess is 20 years or so (although don't hold me to that!).

We have been following this same preservation path with legacy videotape formats, especially those that are extinct or endangered (i.e. 2" Quad, 1", reel-to-reel, and ¾" Umatic). Part of the choice to go from one videotape format to another has to do with our IT infrastructure. We're not quite ready to create and manage digital preservation files, although we're looking into it as an option and it is the way of the future, so we'll be going there sooner or later.

Both with film and videotape, we've been using the DVDs to create access copies for patrons, to make .mov files to stream on the Libraries' Digital Collections site, and to do simple editing or presentation projects. DVDs are not the best format, but they certainly make access easy.

I'm sure you're aware of this, but 35mm prior to 1950 is nitrate based and poses some safety issues, so getting it properly preserved and stored is imperative. The National Film Preservation Foundation is a good source of funding for laboratory work if the film has any national or regional significance. See [www.filmpreservation.org](http://www.filmpreservation.org) for more info. There are five stages of nitrate deterioration. If the film is stable and in good condition, safety is much less of a concern, but you can learn more about film and how it deteriorates in Chapter Two of the National Film Preservation Foundation's Film Preservation Guide ([http://www.filmpreservation.org/preservation-basics/the-film-preservation-guide-download](http://www.filmpreservation.org/preservation-basics/the-film-preservation-guide-download)).

**Pros and Cons of using in house versus external vendors**

Vendors are definitely worth using for film transfer projects, if you have the funding and if the material is at all compromised. We have an Elmo TRV-16G, a simple 16mm telecine projector that we use to create access level DVDs if the film is in good condition. If it is all compromised, I won't let it run through a transport mechanism of any kind, other than a hand viewer like a Moviscop.

The best choice for 35mm film transfer in the state is Alpha Cine in Seattle ([http://www.alphacine.com/](http://www.alphacine.com/)). Contact Jean Fee with questions. She's incredibly helpful.

If you have any obsolete legacy videotape formats like those mentioned above, again, use a vendor to create new DigiBeta Masters or preservation quality files. We've gone to DC Video ([http://dcvideo.com/](http://dcvideo.com/)) and have had great results and wonderful service. I've also had very informative email exchanges with John Walko at Scenesavers ([http://www.scenesavers.com/](http://www.scenesavers.com/)).

If you have more recent videotape formats like VHS or BetaCamSP, you can certainly try setting up your own reformatting station as long as you understand that you are reformatting for access, not preservation. To reformat a videotape properly, you need some pretty extensive analog equipment (vector scopes and wave form monitors, etc.) and someone who understands how to set up the system properly. We've done a bit of research on this topic and we might actually be undertaking something like this in the next few years, but it hasn't happened quite yet. It's a big undertaking.

If you want to reformat for access, i.e. create DVDs from your analog tapes, it is a fairly simple process—you need a deck, an analog-to-digital converter, a decent computer with good editing software, and an external hard drive to store the files you create. It won't be perfect, but it will be serviceable. Always keep in mind that this work takes place in real time. There's no short cut during the duplication process, so figure in 1.5 times the running time of each tape to account for labor costs—plus any time needed to capture metadata, content, etc. Also, make sure you inspect any tape before putting it into a deck.

There is a pretty simple inspection process outlined on the Specs Brothers website. [http://www.specsbros.com/whitepaper.html](http://www.specsbros.com/whitepaper.html). Also, we've created a videotape condition report. Let me know if you're interested, and I can send it to you. (We also have one for film, too)

It is my duty to say this and it may be a no-brainer, but do not, under any circumstances, throw out the original material. DVDs are a good access format, but they're unstable, extremely compressed, and will not last much longer in the marketplace. It is very likely that we will all have to revisit the original materials sometime in the future—or maybe that will be a job for our successors!
Best Storage Practices and recommendations on freezers/cold storage
We store all of our 35mm nitrate and any 16mm with severe Stage 3 vinegar syndrome in a frost-free freezer. I’ve been following storage practices outlined in Film Forever, an Association of Moving Image Archivists publication. It gives a very simple, easy technique for freezing films. [http://www.filmmorever.org/](http://www.filmmorever.org/)

Do not freeze videotapes, however. There are some good guidelines for handling videotape on the AMIA website: [http://www.amianet.org/resources/guides/fact_sheets.pdf](http://www.amianet.org/resources/guides/fact_sheets.pdf)

Reformatting projects in bulk
Reformatting projects in bulk, especially videotape, is a good idea in the sense that vendors will give you a better price when you have quantity. You’ve just got to build the infrastructure to handle all of that new material (i.e. master tapes or files) coming into your repository. It does make sense, though, to do a number of tapes at once, rather than one at a time.

Should you have the money and the desire, there is the SAMMA robotic system for reformatting videotapes sold by Front Porch Digital [http://fpdigital.com/](http://fpdigital.com/) We looked into it, but couldn’t come up with $40,000, although I still hold out hope for a collaborative project one day where multiple institutions can come together to do a mass reformatting/digitization project with their videotape holdings

Providing digital access to materials
At this point, we are providing digital access to our materials by creating .mov files with metadata and content information that we post to our Digital Collections site ([http://content.lib.washington.edu/filmarchweb/index.html](http://content.lib.washington.edu/filmarchweb/index.html)) and link to our finding aids ([http://digital.lib.washington.edu/findingaids/search](http://digital.lib.washington.edu/findingaids/search)). We have chosen to do clips from films rather than the entire film for a couple of reasons—one is server space, the other is the attention span of the user. They’re more likely to look at a 5-minute clip and later request to see the entire film than download and then sit through 25 minutes of “Salmon from Catch to Can.” It also allows us to pick out the interesting bits of home movies or incomplete films that might have relevance to our patrons. ★