Digital Projects Made Easy:
It’s about Partnerships

Library Technology Conference
March 19, 2014

Daardi Sizemore, Archives and Special Collections Librarian
Anne Stenzel, Archives Technician
Heidi Southworth, Digital Initiatives Librarian
Digital Projects @ MSU

- Getting Started
- Early Partnerships
- How we Digitize
- Later Partnerships
- Where we are today

University Archives Digital Collections presented via CONTENTdm
Getting Started

- Minnesota Digital Library, 2000
- 1st Digitized Images in AY2006
  - In MDL
  - In MSU CONTENTdm
  - In-house scanning
Where do you begin?

• **Need a solid base**
  < Standards – What will you use?
  < Committed group – Who on your staff will work on the project? What partnerships do you need?
  < Mission and organization - How does it fit?
  < Funding - Who’s going to pay for it?

• **Standards Matter**
  < Don’t recreate the wheel

• **Content**
  < What do you digitize?
  < Can’t be all things to all people
  < Quality matters (research collection vs random collection)
Standards

- MDL Adopted from CDP
  - Digital Imaging Best Practices
  - Digital Audio Best Practices

- MDL Created/Co-created
  - MINITEX/LDS JOINT STANDARDS REVIEW TASK FORCE - GUIDE TO DIGITAL PROJECTS
  - Minnesota Reflections Metadata Guidelines
Our Documentation

- **Digitization**
  - How to

- **Metadata**
  - Local data dictionary
  - Controlled vocabulary

- **Project Client**
  - How to

- **Formats**
  - Photos, audio, newspapers, etc.

---

**MSU Archives**
**Guide for Scanning**
**Updated September 12, 2011**

**Logon to Computer**
1. Need to logon as student, not GA.
2. Archives2 is user ID
3. See password sheet for password.

**Before Scanning**
1. Turn on scanner. Dust with special brush on a regular basis.
2. Calibration – The scanner should be calibrated once every two weeks. GA and Anne will be responsible for calibration.
3. Select image for scanning. If multiples of the same photo choose the best copy.

**Selecting the Appropriate Scanner**

1. **Microtek – Scanmaker 9800xl (Large Scanner)**
   a. Use for oversize photos, negatives or slides
   b. FYI - This scanner is very slow.
   c. This scanner uses the LaserSoft Imaging - SilverFast MicroT8 software.
2. **Epson – Perfection Photo (small scanner)**
   a. Use for most photographs
   b. This scanner is reasonably fast and high quality.
   c. This scanner uses the VueScan Software.
Early Partnerships

- **Systems**
  - Equipment
  - CONTENTdm

- **Dean of Library Services**
  - Resources
  - Library wide support

- **Minnesota Digital Library**
Initial Project

- Historic Images < 256
- Digitized in-house
- Materials in Minnesota Reflections & University Archives Digital Collections
Student Worker Training

- **Scanner training**
- **Metadata training**
  - Read Chapter 3 “Reading and Researching Photographs”
    - from *Photographs: Archival Care and Management* by Mary Lynn Ritzenhalter and Diane Vogt-O’Conner
    - Discuss Chapter
  - Practice describing photos
  - Provide them reference tools
    - Yearbooks
    - Overviews of buildings
    - Dates of name changes
    - Encourage them to ask questions
Overview: Our Steps to Photo Digitization

**Students**
- Select photos
- Scan photos
- Sleeve and Label photos
- Complete metadata
- Digitally store photos
- Re-box photos

**Staff**
- Review Metadata
- Approve Images
- Index Images
- Back-up digital images
  - Burn DVD Backup
  - Copy images in Step 2 Folder to external hard drive
- Answer questions along the way
Equipment

- Use our “Guide for Scanning”

- Four scanners
  - Epson Expression 10000 XL  
    - Oversize
  - Epson Perfection 4990 Photo  
    - Photos
  - Epson Perfection V750 PRO  
    - Negatives
  - Fujitsu fi-7160  
    - Sheet feeder
Photo Management/Storage

• Physical
  < Sleeved
  < Labeled with file name
  < Foldered – Location added to metadata
  < Will be stored in less valuable space

• Digital
  < Initial scan saved to “step 1 folder”
  < When metadata is complete, photo moved to “step 2 folder”
  < Step 2 Folder regularly reviewed and contents moved to external hard drive and backup DVDs (2 copies) are burned
  < Step 1 and 2 folders are backed up on campus server
Initial Project - What We Learned

- **Digitization**
  - Training important
  - Students got good at scanning
  - Could be slow (our equipment)

- **Metadata**
  - It takes longer than scanning
  - Needed better local guidelines for some fields (Title, Description, Local Subjects)
  - Needed more training
  - Not everyone was good at it
  - More staff time was required

- **General**
  - Documentation important
  - Local guides were very helpful
  - Consistent staffing a positive
  - Value of partnerships

Students Studying in library of Old Main, Mankato State Teacher’s College, 1949
Partnerships Beyond Photos

- Electronic Theses and Dissertations
- Magazines and Newspapers
- Oral Histories
Electronic Theses & Dissertations

- College of Graduate Studies and Research
- Proquest
- 249 ETDs (since AY2011)
- PDF format
- Metadata < Author supplied
- Uploaded to OCLC and Library Catalog
Magazines and Newspapers

- **Minnesota Historical & Cultural Grants**
  - Mankatonian (1888-1913)
    - 199 issues
  - Reporter (1926-1975)
    - 3009 issues

- **Out-sourced digitization**
  - Northern Micrographics

- **Compound Objects (in ContentDM)**
  - Tiffs

- **Metadata**
  - Students
  - Staff

This project has been financed in part with funds provided by the State of Minnesota through the Minnesota Historical Society from the Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund.
Compound Objects: What we learned

- Start Small
- Takes more time than you think
  - Even repetitive metadata takes time
  - Compound Object File structure is time consuming
  - CONTENTdm challenges
- Working with a vendor can be positive
  - MDL RFQ’s helpful
- Value of student workers
Oral Histories

• 405 oral histories on audio cassette

• Partnerships
  < Music Library
    ✓ Converted audio cassettes to digital format
    ✓ Cassettes were in fair to poor condition
  < Systems
  < Circulation
Oral History Digitization Equipment

- **Cassette Player**
  - Denon tape deck DRS-610
- **MobilePre USB Preamp Interface device**
- **Mac**
  - Peak LE 5.2 software
- **DYMO DiscPainter**
Oral History Digitization Workflow

- Internal and shared logs
- Shared training documentation
Oral History Transcription Equipment

- USB transcription foot pedal
- Express Scribe (free version)
Oral History Transcription

- Internal and shared logs
- Shared training documentation
Oral Histories: What We Learned

- Value of Student Workers
- Consistent Staffing important
  - Documentation can save the day
- Partnerships invaluable
  - Internal
  - External
What We Learned - General

- In-house and Out-sourced digitization BOTH take significant time
- Important to add into unit workflow
  - Digitized and described more than 7308 images since 2008
- Important to regularly review and update your process
  - Check standards
  - See what others are doing
  - Change can be good

Aerial view of Highland Campus at Mankato State University, 1980
What We’ve Learned: Digitization

- Training still important
- Students got good at scanning
- Faster scanners improved productivity
- Special Formats
  - Audio
  - Negatives and Oversize
  - Good to have a specialist

Six students studying at a table at Mankato State University, 1977
What We Learned: Metadata

- It takes 2-3x longer than scanning
- Training important and should be ongoing
- Not equal quality description (and some students can’t spell)
- More staff time was required – Can’t put off our part in the process
  - Observe and correct issues sooner rather than later
- Our metadata isn’t perfect and we’re okay with that.
  - Value of Crowdsourcing
- Controlled vocabulary review and clean up is good.

President C. L. Crawford in Lincoln Library Lounge area, Mankato State College, 1961
Next Steps

- Hired Digital Initiatives Librarian
- Institutional Repository
- New Digital Collections Platform
- New projects/new partners
Library Digitization Taskforce (Digi-Squad)

- **August 2013**
  - Implement an Institutional Repository
  - What about our digital collections?

- **December 2013**
  - Purchase a commercial product for our new institutional repository
  - Purchase a new service (based on open source) for our digital collections
• 100% hosted with unlimited, dedicated customer support, software-as-a-service
• Professional, well developed, fully customizable presentation platform
• Highly visible and discoverable by major search engines
• ETDs, Journals and Conferences
• SelectedWorks option
• http://digitalcommons.bepress.com/
Cornerstone: A Collection of Scholarly and Creative Works

- Preserve the intellectual output of Minnesota State University, Mankato
- **Spring 2014 – two partners**
  - College of Graduate Studies and Research (ETD collection)
  - Undergraduate Research Center (Journal, Symposium)
- **Fall 2014 – more partners**
  - Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
  - Seeking out College, Departments and Campus Units
• Open source, fully customizable, robust preservation platform (Prince Edward Island Robertson Library)
• Hosted and supported by
• Photograph collection, student publications, other materials from the Archives
• Similar to CONTENTdm (zoom, OCR) but without the challenges
• https://www.mnpals.org/products/islandora
Arch: University Archives
Digital Collections

- **Spring 2014 = migrating materials**
  - Photograph Collection
  - Student Publications
- **Summer 2014 = add new content**
  - Yearbooks (1910-1981)
  - Oral histories
- **August 2014 = estimated “go live” date**

Ostrander Bell Tower and Alumni Arch, 2010 from University Image Library
Making Connections/Partnerships

• Interconnected products = Cornerstone and Arch
• Partnerships
  < Integrated Marketing
  < Other Campus Units
  < Within the Library
  < Beyond the University
• Your digital projects can be the ultimate tool for making and building connections!
Questions

Daardi Sizemore: daardi.sizemore@mnsu.edu
Anne Stenzel: anne.stenzel@mnsu.edu
Heidi Southworth: heidi.southworth@mnsu.edu