WPLC Historical and Local Digital Collections Committee
NOTES
January 17, 2017
10:00-11:30am
by Google Hangout

PRESENT: Inese Christman, WVLS; Jill Fuller, Bridges; Alison Hoffman, Monarch; Rose Ziech, SCLS

STAFF/NOTES: Emily Pfotenhauer, WiLS

Updates – Collaborative Digitization

WPLC/Recollection Wisconsin – various support provided for collaborative digitization in 2016, growing out of the recommendations from the WPLC Collaborative Digitization Work Group.

[Digital Projects Toolkit](#) online course is now live. 23 people registered, but only about half have logged in to start the course so far. Emily will send a reminder to those who haven't. Course is targeted at system-level staff (although some others are participating as well). Based on feedback from this round, we may tweak and offer a second round more broadly.

[Digital Projects in Wisconsin](#) Google Group. For now, this is meant to complement the course – place for people to post questions related to the course. So far, no action in the group other than some announcements from Emily. Will share and promote the Google Group more widely after the course followup webinar on March 16. Promoting the Google Group may be a good topic to brainstorm on at next committee meeting in April.

Vendor list and tips for working with vendors. Recollection WI worked with partners at UWM and Marquette to compile a list of [digitization vendors](#). Meant to be a living document (spreadsheet in Google) -- will continue to update as relevant. UWM/Marquette preferred that the list is made available to libraries on request, rather than shared publicly on the RW/WPLC websites. To go along with the list, we now have a tip sheet with recommended questions to ask a vendor and information to provide when working with a vendor. http://recollectionwisconsin.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/VendorTipSheet.pdf

[Grants information](#) on WPLC blog. This sussed out as many relevant grant opportunities as possible. We can continue to keep an eye out for additional grants to share, but there aren't really enough out there to continue this as a regular series of blog posts.

Updates – Historical Newspapers

First batch of content post-pilot is almost ready to transfer to WNA for upload to the BadgerLink database. This batch includes 11 titles from 6 different libraries ([see list here](#)). 5 of the 6 libraries had microfilm digitized by WHS.

There is no specific funding earmarked for newspaper digitization in the state right now, but some libraries have applied for LSTA grants. Knowing this is a high priority for libraries, there may be a possibility for LSTA to offer some kind of funding dedicated specifically for newspapers in the future. *(Emily note: is there any potential for WPLC to contribute a pool of funding towards newspaper digitization and/or upload costs? Maybe some kind of matching grant??)*

Meeting of newspaper project partners (WHS, WNA, WPLC, DPI) coming up on Feb. 17: any questions/concerns from this committee to bring to this group?

One question Emily has had from libraries is concerns about potential duplication of effort – libraries don't want to invest in digitizing and uploading if their community's newspapers are going to end up online through Newspaper Archive or Newspapers.com. It seems like those companies work directly with libraries, so this shouldn't lead to overlapping effort.

This was Jill's experience with Newspapers.com when in Illinois. They reached out to Newspapers.com, which scanned their library's microfilm for free, made it available online, and gave the library free access to their content within the database. The library also got a copy of the digital files but agreed not to post them anywhere else online for a certain period (3 or 5 years).

A question came up re: concern that libraries may have the perception that, with the WHS microfilm digitization service, they're paying Wisconsin Historical Society to digitize materials in WHS's own collection. *(Emily note: I believe the WHS scanning service is cost recovery but not profit-generating; I can find out. Not sure if that helps with this concern or not.)*

The committee suggested that increasing the presence/visibility of the contributing libraries on the BadgerLink database would generate more buy-in/interest from/value to libraries. Is there a way to point people to their local library for additional resources – local history materials that aren't online, or online resources that aren't newspapers? This may not be feasible within the BadgerLink and WNA database structure, but this could be a role for WPLC and/or Recollection Wisconsin. A small step would be to add the WHS logo and a link to the WHS website to the WNA database site. *(Emily note: WHS is working on adding more information to their website about newspaper holdings, including various digital resources. I can check on the status of that.)*

Brainstorming: Ideas and priorities for supporting collaborative digitization efforts

Which recommendations from the Collaborative Digitization Work Group have already been accomplished? Primarily in the Training, Information Sharing and Access areas: train the trainer curriculum (the Digital Projects Toolkit course), vendor list, metadata templates (part of the toolkit course), information sharing about grants, and continued support of collection hosting by Milwaukee Public Library (10 collections migrated and three new collections added in 2016).

The group was interested in all of the Collaborative Digitization Work Group recommendations and also made other suggestions; the three that rose to the top were:

1) Big picture info sheet – something that maps out/visualizes the overall digitization process from start to finish, to give libraries a better sense of what is involved. Could be shared on WPLC website, Recollection Wi website, and by systems to their members. Also possibly a separate, complementary info sheet specifically about storage and digital preservation.
2) Cost models/estimates – at least some generic project examples, so a library can get a sense of what's possible with the resources they have (for example, what would the cost be for a particular vendor to digitize 500 photos?). Or possibly a more customized version of this, a la WiLS Coop price quotes.

3) Directory of organizations that can offer up equipment/staff for digitization – such as the large format map scanner at UW-Milwaukee. These would not necessarily need to be statewide services – i.e. Racine PL working with orgs in Racine County.

The group also discussed in more depth the issues of storage and digital preservation, and the Work Group's suggestion of a multitype "Digital Preservation Task Force." Digital preservation is a priority for WiLS to explore this year and we are expecting to plan some sort of "summit" to bring together potential stakeholders and leaders on this issue, but there are no specific plans in place yet. There also may be some connection to be made with the PLSR initiative, but no specifics there yet either.

ESLS/Monarch has implemented some basic digital preservation steps including storing content on a separate server and running checksums. LSTA digitization grants include a requirement for backups/storage but there are no particular baseline requirements/guidance. One of the course modules in the Digital Projects Toolkit focuses on storage and digital preservation.

There's something of a chicken/egg challenge with this topic – libraries need some education to understand what digital preservation is and why it's important, but is it valuable to provide education – and possibly amp up libraries' worries -- without offering a manageable solution for a complex problem? On the other hand, if we start educating after a solution is determined, and the solution costs $, it puts libraries in a position of being sold to/having to buy in to solve a problem they didn't know they had.

The committee did not arrive at any immediate next steps for the digital preservation issue other than continued information sharing between relevant groups (WPLC, WiLS, WHS, etc.). One suggestion for the education component was an info sheet specifically about storage/preservation basics.

Information sharing

SCLS is hiring an LTE to work on coordinating digitization projects with members.

Bridges sets aside some funding for members to apply for small grants to work on projects (not specifically digitization projects). Not aware of any systems doing something similar for digitization.

Administrative

Emily will send Doodle to schedule April meeting.

Google Hangout was pretty glitchy, so we'll likely do a conference call instead next time.