

July 2014

Introduction

Robyn Ward
Lewis & Clark College

Recommended Citation

Ward, R. (2014). Introduction. *OLA Quarterly*, 17(4), 3-4. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7710/1093-7374.1336>

© 2014 by the author(s).

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

Introduction

Oregon Connecting To Collections (OR C2C), or the Oregon Preservation Assessment and Education Planning Project, is a collaborative effort among archives, libraries, and museums to create a statewide collections plan which would address institutional needs for training, consulting, mentoring, and networking in the areas of collections care and management, disaster preparedness, advocacy, strategic planning and priority setting, and technology for preservation. Connecting To Collections is a grant-funded initiative by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and in Oregon is administered by the Oregon Museum Association (OMA). Partners for the project include the Northwest Archivists, Oregon Heritage Commission, Oregon Historical Society, Oregon Library Association, Oregon State Archives, Oregon State Library, and Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute.

In dedicating this *OLA Quarterly* issue to OR C2C specifically and Oregon collaborative preservation efforts in general, I hope to bring attention to the great effort that has not only been going on since 2009 with the C2C planning grant but to the efforts that have been instrumental in leading up to the reception and implementation of the grant. Authors will address a past, present, and future perspective of the state of preservation in Oregon as well as the importance of the continuation of this work.

But first, in order to take a look at the effort in Oregon, one should step back and take a broader view of the state of heritage collections nationally. Shawna Gandy's article, "What's All this Fuss about Preservation: The Heritage Health Index & IMLS Connecting To Collections," addresses this national effort. In 1997, the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities was charged to report on the importance of cultural assets to society, and to assess private and federal support for creating and preserving these assets. The Committee returned with the affirmation, "that a healthy cultural life is vital to a democratic society." What came about from this report was a nation-wide survey of the state of cultural collections, known as the Heritage Health Index. Findings from this survey led the IMLS to create the Connecting To Collections initiative.

The preservation of library materials is one of our key professional duties. Although each library must assume some level of responsibility, associations can contribute to a wider effort by providing leadership in the establishment of sound preservation practices, advising and assisting libraries in developing solutions to preservation problems, and promoting education within the profession.

—CHARGE TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PRESERVATION

In 1995, OLA established a Special Committee on Preservation to spearhead a statewide survey of Oregon libraries in order to assess the condition of its collective cultural collections and assess the level of preparedness each institution had in planning for and responding to disaster. The Summer 1997 *OLA Quarterly* issue covers the findings and work of this Special Committee and also speaks to disaster preparedness. Two key articles, Normandy Helmer's "The State of Oregon Preservation in 1995: A Survey by the Oregon Library Association's Special Committee on Preservation," and Lawrence Landis' "Disaster Preparedness: An Essential Function of Libraries and Archives," should not be overlooked in this discussion. This *Quarterly* issue is a vital read when considering past efforts in Oregon.

OLAQ

OREGON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Kris Kern and Alex Toth continue this discussion in their perspective on preservation and disaster response preparedness in Oregon libraries, including a section briefly discussing the findings from the 1996 survey conducted by the Special Committee on Preservation. Kris and Alex also present the collective spirit of preservation efforts and the success and effectiveness of collaboration, focusing in on one such effort, the Disaster Recovery Group (DiRG) instituted by the Portland Area Library System (PORTALS). (This group is now the Oregon Library Association Library Preservation Round Table, aka, OLA LPRT).

The OLA LPRT has been an active and prominent voice in the OR C2C. With representation on the OR C2C Steering Committee, LPRT, along with the other C2C partners, took part in hiring a consultant, Ruth Metz, in managing the project. Ruth's piece, "What Oregon's Archival, Library, and Museum Personnel Need to Preserve Heritage Collections," explicitly details the grant project, its purpose, findings and outcomes.

In this OLAQ issue, we further highlight two key components of the project. Judith Norton writes about her experience traveling to the five regional forums held in Eugene, Portland, Medford, Bend, and Pendleton. OLA Past-President Rob Everett's letter touches on his participation in a Leader's Summit in Salem this past March and an important point he took away from it.

Now that everything for the OR C2C planning project has been finalized and reported to IMLS, the C2C Steering Committee is currently writing a proposal for the follow up IMLS C2C implementation grant. Kyle Jansson, coordinator of the planning grant with the Oregon Heritage Commission, presents key components of the implementation project, providing an in-depth look at the work being done now.

This has been a tremendous multidisciplinary effort, one that is appropriate and timely. More now than ever, institutions are looking to pull together resources and expertise, the Orbis Cascade Alliance being one example. The collaborative spirit is strong in Oregon and with the right direction I believe we can create a solid and useful model for preservation and disaster preparedness which will provide assistance to all cultural heritage institutions throughout the State.

Guest Editor
Robyn Ward, MLIS
Chair, OLA Library Preservation Round Table
Lewis & Clark College
Aubrey R. Watzek Library
robynw@lclark.edu