Community collections:
Exploring three approaches to collaboration and outreach through digitization initiatives

David Gwynn
University Libraries, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Society of North Carolina Archivists Annual Meeting
12 March 2015
Digital Projects at UNCG

http://libcdm1.uncg.edu/
Four focus areas

• UNCG history
• Local and regional history
• Women’s history
• Performing arts
Outreach goals

• Create a local history portal.
• Facilitate communication between Greensboro repositories (goal shared with SCUA).
• Uncover “hidden” collections.
• Increase community engagement with digital collections.
Past outreach initiatives

• Collaborative projects:
  – Civil Rights Greensboro
  – NC Runaway Slave Ads
  – Greensboro Pictorials/Newspapers
  – Other informal collaborations

• Speaking engagements/presentations

• Social media
A tale of three projects
A tale of three projects

- What were we trying to accomplish?
- What did we actually accomplish?
- How did we accomplish it?
- What did we learn in the process?
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

http://digitalgreensboro.org/
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

• 2012-2014
• LSTA-funded
• Details Greensboro history from Reconstruction to World War II
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

- UNCG
- Bennett College
- Greensboro College
- Greensboro Historical Museum

- Greensboro Public Library
- Guilford College
- N.C. A&T State University
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

Goals:

• Low barrier to entry.
• Each partner to contribute in whatever way they were able.
• A community project, NOT a UNCG project.
• Genesis of a larger local history portal.
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

Workflow distribution:

• UNCG and GHM did most of the scanning.
• Guilford had students do more intensive metadata for their items.
• All contributed items and metadata creation.
• All participated in project planning.
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

Site interface:

- New URL: http://digitalgreensboro.org/
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

Site interface:

- New URL: digitalgreensboro.org
- CONTENTdm “overlay” to bind together collections and “minimize the UNCG.”
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

Textiles

The textile industry has been a vital part of the growth of Greensboro and the New Market.

Teachers

Greensboro has been dramatically affected by its educational institutions at the primary, secondary, and collegiate level.

Troops

Digital resources on the history of textiles, education, and military life in Greensboro.
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

Site interface:

- New URL: digitalgreensboro.org
- CONTENTdm “overlay” to bind together collections and “minimize the UNCG”.
- All logos and credit equally prominent.
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

Site interface:

• New URL: digitalgreensboro.org
• CONTENTdm “overlay” to bind together collections and “minimize the UNCG”.
• All logos and credit equally prominent.
• Landing pages for each partner.
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

North Carolina A&T State University:
North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is a public, doctoral/research, 1890 land-grant university committed to exemplary teaching and learning, scholarly and creative research, and effective engagement and public service. The university offers degrees at the baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral levels and has a commitment to excellence in a comprehensive range of academic disciplines. Our unique legacy and educational philosophy provide students with a broad range of experiences that foster transformation and leadership for a dynamic and global society.

The mission of F.D. Bluford Library at N.C. A&T State is to support and advance academic scholarship and research at N.C. A&T through services, collections, technologies, staff expertise and spaces. The library is committed to ensuring access to global information resources that inspire exploration, discovery and personal growth. The physical facility offers wireless access throughout four levels, individual study spaces, group and collaboration rooms, and public computers. The library maintains a balanced collection of circulating print and non-print materials, with an ever growing collection of electronic resources available for local and remote access or for download to mobile devices. Archival collections documenting the history of the University and the region are also available.

Explore all items about N.C. A&T State University
Explore only items contributed by The F.D. Bluford Library at N.C. A&T State University:
- All items contributed by N.C. A&T State University
- A&T College Scrapbooks
- Aparriee
- Pearsall Collection
- The Register

Project partners:

UNCG DIGITAL COLLECTIONS
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

Site interface:

- New URL: digitalgreensboro.org
- CONTENTdm “overlay” to bind together collections and “minimize the UNCG”.
- All logos and credit equally prominent.
- Landing pages for each partner.
- Extensible site.
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

Launch event:
• Held at Greensboro Historical Museum.
• All partners contributed.
• Presentations by Cal Shepard, Kevin Cherry, and project team.
• Community invited.
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

Challenges:

• Scheduling meetings.
• Physical movement and tracking of items.
• Identifying collections and sharing the vision.
• Different priorities/changing staff.
Textiles, Teachers, and Troops

Lessons learned:

• Branding: A community project, not a UNCG project.
• Credit for everyone (partner landing pages, all logos, metadata notes).
• Low barrier to participation/flexibility.
• Build on the strengths of each partner.
• Communicate. Then, communicate more.
Community Collections

http://libcdm1.uncg.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/Community
Community Collections

• 2013-2014.
• Funded through UNCG Community-based Research Grant.
• Two students: one graduate and one undergraduate.
Community Collections

Partners:
• College Place United Methodist Church
• First Presbyterian Church
• West Market Street United Methodist Church
• Lindley Park Elementary School
Community Collections

Goals:

• Identifying community partners and “hidden” collections.

• Devise simple and low-cost field digitization techniques.

• Connect community groups with appropriate repositories.
Community Collections

Community meeting with librarians and archivists present.
Community Collections

Initial consultation with partner(s).
Community Collections

Students in the field, digitizing items.
Community Collections

Image editing & metadata creation at UNCG.
Community Collections

Website.
Community Collections

Challenges:

- Materials often not organized in any way.
- Lack of suitable workspace.
- Community groups unfamiliar with archival principles.
Community Collections

Lessons learned:
• Partners have to drive the process, BUT…
Community Collections

Lessons learned:

• Partners have to drive the process, BUT…
• They often need some guidance.
Community Collections

Lessons learned:

• Field-based digitization is fine for some items and less so for others, BUT…
Community Collections

Lessons learned:

• Field-based digitization is fine for some items and less so for others, BUT…

• It’s a really good way to identify candidates for accession or for more intensive digitization.
Community Collections

Lessons learned:

• There is incredible demand within the community (churches, schools, community organizations, etc.) to preserve and display their collections, BUT…
Community Collections

Lessons learned:

• There is incredible demand within the community (churches, schools, community organizations, etc.) to preserve and display their collections, BUT…

• These groups have virtually no internal resources to do so.
DGHi Explorers

Hayes-Taylor YMCA

Achievers

Do more and more with the Hayes-Taylor YMCA Achievers Program. The Achievers Program includes mentoring, leadership training and college readiness. Program begins September 2015. Registration opens in July.

Ages: 13-18
Program Dates: September - May
Meeting Times: 1st and 3rd Saturdays.
DGHi Explorers

• 2014-2015.
• Funded through IMLS Sparks!Ignition Grant.
• Partner: Hayes-Taylor YMCA (Greensboro).
DGHi Explorers

Goals (youth):

• Work with at-risk youth.
• Promote interest in community history.
• Train youth on digital image capture, technology skills.
• Build up resumes, college applications.
DGHi Explorers

Goals (community):

• Document history of underserved and underrepresented communities.
• Discover “hidden” materials held by individuals.
• Connect individuals with repositories.
• Develop low-cost methods of field digitization.
DGHi Explorers

Activities:

• History sessions.
• Photography sessions.
• Archives field trips.
• Field digitization days.
• Community scanning day.
• Final presentations.
DGHHi Explorers

Challenges:

• Fitting into youth schedules.
• Finding community mentors.
• Community “buy-in”.
DGHi Explorers

What we hope to learn:

• What materials are “hidden” in people’s garages, attics, etc.
• What overlooked aspects of Greensboro history do these items document?
• Who has stories? Are they willing to share those stories?
DGHi Explorers

What we assume (and we may be wrong):

• This probably will not result in a huge digital collection.

• Digital capture will likely be less than optimal.

• The community outreach and contacts will make the project worthwhile anyway.
More to come

We’ll keep you posted!
Questions?
Contact

David Gwynn
*Digital Projects Coordinator*

224 Jackson Library, UNCG
PO Box 26170
Greensboro NC 27412

Email: [jdgwynn@uncg.edu](mailto:jdgwynn@uncg.edu)
Collections: [http://libcdm1.uncg.edu/](http://libcdm1.uncg.edu/)
Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/uncgdigital](https://www.facebook.com/uncgdigital)
Phone: 336.256.2606