

**Center for Design & Cultural Heritage**

AMERICAN ARCHITECTURAL FOUNDATION

# **SAVE AMERICA'S TREASURES: IMPACT AND LESSONS**

September, 2017

This study was made possible by a generous grant from  
the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

American  
Architectural  
Foundation

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AMERICAN ARCHITECTURAL FOUNDATION

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The American Architectural Foundation's Center for Design & Cultural Heritage

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## SAVE AMERICA'S TREASURES: IMPACT AND LESSONS

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# Executive Summary

The American Architectural Foundation's (AAF) Center for Design & Cultural Heritage is pleased to release this important study of Save America's Treasures (SAT) grants given to collection's based projects between 1999-2010.

This study was made possible by a generous grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. To complete the research portion of the study, AAF worked with Ithaka S+R and would like to acknowledge the valuable work performed by Deanna Marcum, Senior Advisor, and Liam Sweeney, Research Analyst. We would also like to thank our colleagues at the National Park Service, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities for their assistance and guidance throughout this process.

Although the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) accomplished a great deal in preserving structures and places since it became law in 1966, until the creation of Save America's Treasures in 1999 the ephemeral nature of the performing arts and the fragility of films, paintings, prints, sculpture, books, manuscripts and other intellectual and cultural property were not a part of the NHPA's focus. Save America's Treasures built on the NHPA's legacy and expanded its focus to become the first and only federal program designed specifically to honor and preserve our nation's most significant structures and places, as well as collections, artifacts and artistic works.

Save America's Treasures is managed by the National Park Service and the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities in cooperation with the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The American Architectural Foundation, has been SAT's nonprofit partner since 2014, and is on a mission to tell the

stories behind the Save America's Treasures grants. Working with the National Park Service and its Save America's Treasures partner agencies, we are working to increase public understanding and visibility of this critical program and the role it plays in preserving our most significant cultural, intellectual and heritage resources.

From 1999 to 2010, Congress appropriated more than \$315 million to approximately 1,300 SAT projects. Among them were Thomas Edison's laboratory and its thousands of documents; the poems carved by Chinese immigrants in the walls of Angel Island; Mesa Verde's cliff dwellings and its collections of Native American artifacts; and Boston's African Meeting House. By shining a light on this country's vast unmet preservation needs, SAT inspired countless Americans to make remarkable discoveries in their own communities, and at the same time it leveraged more than \$377 million in private investment and contributed more than 16,000 jobs to local and state economies in the rescue, rehabilitation, and reuse of structures, and the conservation of artwork, documents and artifacts. Taken together, these completed projects form the foundation of this nation's identity, culture and history.

Despite this success, SAT's federal funding was suspended in 2011. Without federal funding, there was little SAT could do to continue to restore and conserve nationally significant structures, collections and artifacts. However, what was not constrained was AAF's continued leadership to tell the story of SAT and most importantly, its ability to use the program's holistic approach and projects to re-invigorate preservation for the 21st century.

Save America's Treasures in its body of work captures the breadth, diversity and history of this nation's achievements, democratic values and struggles. With the Mellon Foundation's generous support, AAF and the Ithaka team were able to conduct the first assessment of some of SAT's

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hundreds of collections projects. Although the abundance of stories and themes in these projects are too many to enumerate, the intent of this study was to capture crucial knowledge and perspective not only on what SAT has preserved, but also the impacts of SAT's leadership and funding on the institutions and their communities.

Four main impacts of SAT funding emerge from the stories that the Ithaka team uncovered:

1. Access – SAT funding was key to enabling unprecedented access both for the general public and scholars to completed projects. The public visibility of each collection was significantly increased both through online access as well as public exhibitions of preserved materials, which in turn created new partnerships with other institutions. These SAT projects also opened new fields of future study by historians, scholars, archivists, writers and students.

2. Digitization – SAT funding was key to digitizing the collections and fashioning new approaches to online practices. In fact, SAT appears to have played a crucial and transformational role in developing professional standards and processes that are in practice today. SAT funding directly spurred the growth of digitization within the collections world and stimulated the creation of metadata search methods that have dramatically increased the accessibility of the collections. Receiving SAT funding allowed organizations to jump start a process that otherwise would have taken years to complete and in the process created industry methodologies that are in use today.

3. Partnerships – SAT funding was key to fostering collaborative professional and organizational partnerships over the course of the projects' completion. The financial resources provided by SAT enable institutions to come together to solve the myriad challenges of the projects. It allowed them to share materials and information creating new models and modalities for communication to get the job done.

4. Preservation – SAT funding was key most importantly to providing the critical funding necessary to preserve and save these collections. The funding enabled organizations to stop deterioration and repair and restore objects in line with current best practices. It is abundantly evident that the crucial goal of SAT was achieved through these grants – American treasures were indeed saved.

One lesson learned through this study is that to tell the stories of the often groundbreaking and crucial work done through the auspices of SAT funding, better records need to be kept of grant results and achievements. These records need to be digitized and available for study to better understand the impacts of this unique federal-private funding program.

Finally, and most significantly, Save America's Treasures through its adjudication and recognition has identified almost 500 nationally significant collections, archives, artifacts and artistic works where before SAT there was no such body of work. These projects now stand alongside the National Historic Landmarks restored by SAT. As a whole, these projects are a testament to what could have been lost. They illuminate the frailty and ephemeral nature of this nation's cultural and historic legacy. What this study confirms is one of the greatest weaknesses of collections in that they are often out sight or overlooked by private funders. There is a critical need to continue to bring attention to this cultural legacy and public/private investment. As demonstrated in this study, funding for new projects not only will save important artifacts, documents, artistic works, and stories that might otherwise be lost for posterity, but will also allow access for all Americans to these pieces of our country's rich cultural heritage.

More American treasures need saving and the Save America's Treasures program is a proven funding vehicle to achieve these goals for Americans today and for generations to come.



ITHAKA S+R

# Save America's Treasures: Impact and Lessons

8/27/2017

*Deanna Marcum / [Deanna.Marcum@ithaka.org](mailto:Deanna.Marcum@ithaka.org)*

As part of the National Historic Preservation Fund, Save America's Treasures awarded nearly 500 grants between 1999 and 2010 through the National Park Service, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services to preserve collections that embody the American story. The collections contain major parts of the nation's artistic, social, and intellectual history. The impact of these grants has not been assessed in any comprehensive way, and one of the reasons the Administration gave for suspending funding after 2010 was that the program lacked "rigorous performance metrics and evaluation efforts".

The American Architectural Foundation (AAF) became the national nonprofit partner for the Save America's Treasure (SAT) grant program in 2014, and through its leadership continued to keep the legacy of SAT alive. As part of that effort, it proposed to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation this assessment. With support from Mellon, AAF invited Ithaka S+R join in its plan to conduct research and provide documentation for the collections-related SAT projects, of which there were estimated to be 479.

Ithaka S+R staff is most grateful to our colleagues at the American Architectural Foundation for their collaboration and assistance. We also thank the many individuals from the 21 organizations we selected for case studies who provided information about their SAT grants.

The work began in January 2017 and concludes with this report, which was completed at the end of August 2017. Although rigorous quantitative assessment was not possible, as described in the following narrative, we believe that the case studies tell a compelling story about how the SAT grants transformed cultural institutions from collecting organizations that served research to educational institutions to serving a much broader audience.

## Research Plan

Ithaka S+R originally proposed a two-phased project in which it would review all collections related projects and build a data base of information about those projects that included, when available, elements such as:

- Conservation techniques employed
- Matching funds leveraged
- Community engagement results
- Lessons learned

For the second phase, Ithaka S+R and AAF agreed on selecting ten SAT projects for in-depth case studies. Ithaka S+R would conduct one to two telephone interviews per project, conduct desk research on the project's evidence of impact when available, and travel to at least five locations to conduct on-site visits. The case studies of two to three pages each would focus on the successful aspects of the project, the factors that contributed to that success, and the lessons learned that would benefit other institutions.

We proposed to launch the project with a meeting in January 2017 of principals from the four funding agencies: the National Park Service, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services in Washington, D.C.

## Challenges to the Research Method

The research plan proved not to be feasible. So much time had passed since the early SAT awards that many of the agencies' files had been sent to off-site storage. In other instances, grant files had been destroyed in keeping with the agencies' archival retention policies. In yet other cases, files could not be made easily available because of privacy and legal policies of the agencies.

We met with the American Architectural Foundation staff to revise the methodology, based on the evidence we could assemble. We concluded that the database of Save America's Treasures grants that Daniel Tana, of AAF, had constructed would suffice. Ithaka S+R would focus its attention of identifying 21 SAT grants as exemplars of the collections-based

projects, conduct interviews with the principals, and develop case studies to submit to the AAF as the deliverable for the project.

## Challenges to Reconstructing the Past

Among the most encouraging findings of this project is that staff involved with Save America's Treasures projects became the digital pioneers who would become highly marketable professionals in the library and museum communities. Many of the staff who wrote the grant proposals and worked on or oversaw their implementation were no longer with the institution. Tracking down the individuals who knew about grants that had been awarded in the early 2000s and could speak knowledgeably about the impact of those grants was an especially difficult task. The work they had done was, in many cases, groundbreaking and it was rewarded with new opportunities to do more in the digital realm.

The difficulty in finding staff with knowledge of the projects underscores the need to develop written documentation at the organization level so that others can benefit from lessons learned.

## Choosing the Case Studies

Ithaca S+R staff worked closely with AAF to choose representative case studies. Of 479 possible choices, it was challenging to identify just 21 to develop more fully. We did not look for the “best” examples of SAT grant success. Instead, we aimed to provide a sampling of SAT's body of work with its diverse mix of cultures, themes, and institutions—large and small, well-endowed and poorly resourced, urban and rural. We aimed to learn as much as possible about the impact of the SAT grant—on the institution, the staff, and the broader community.

Unlike structures and places, collections, documents, photographs and artistic works are often hidden. Only a small percentage of any institution's collections are experienced by the public and many because of their condition are often unavailable to scholars and researchers. With all of the variations in institutions and types of projects, the findings were remarkably similar. Save America's Treasures has catalyzed new techniques in preservation and built an extraordinary model in use of technology to reveal not just the primary stories of these collections, but new ones as well.

Some of the remarkable stories in these case studies include priceless audio like the oldest playable sound recording by Thomas Edison in a small science museum in upstate New York to a fragile collection of silent films overseen by the Library of Congress. The grants were awarded at the time when digital technology was becoming an important force. Having external grant money to innovate by using technology and digitization created new public platforms to share these collections. And the public access it afforded made an enormous difference in the lives of these institutions and the staff who worked on the projects.

SAT unleashed cutting edge technology to unlock the sound in the case of the Edison recording. And it brought about one of the largest silent film preservation efforts by forging collaborations between major film archives, which set new standards and best practices in film preservation. The later brought about a revival of interest in silent films with festivals presenting many of 94 films restored with SAT funding.

Yet, for all of the successful and innovative preservation efforts in these case studies, they also illuminate the enormous risk of loss all of these collections represent. The conservation of Gordon Parks' photographs, for instance, were seen by its SAT grant recipient as "recovered histories of America." These photographs inform our history and identity as Americans and their loss would have altered and changed that narrative forever.

The 21 case studies are appended to this report. Each tells the story of the importance of the SAT grant to the strategic development of the institution.

## Lessons Learned

In preparing the 21 case studies, we discovered a number of commonalities among grant recipients:

- We found overwhelming appreciation and gratitude for the SAT grants the institutions had received. Without exception, the grantees concluded that without the SAT grant, they would not have achieved the results that were possible with external funding.
- Most of the grant projects were conceived of as preservation projects—the need to rescue deteriorating collections—but because they originated in the earliest days of digital technology, nearly all of them morphed into digitization for access projects, as well.

- The Save America’s Treasures guidelines were flexible enough to include many types of collections—film, recorded sound, print, even microfilm. SAT’s flexibility resulted in a great variety of collections being made accessible to the public.

- Copyright law, more than any other reason, is the barrier that precludes some collections from being accessible through the web. Audiovisual resources have particularly high intellectual property hurdles to overcome before materials are Internet-accessible.

However, SAT also created new opportunities for showcasing newly restored silent films in festivals, as well as allowing Americans and others to listen and learn from Edward R. Murrow's hundred's of “This I Believe” audio essays by prominent citizens.

- The requirement for matching funds was useful in incentivizing parent organizations to support preservation and digitization project. This in turn raised the profile and value of preservation entities within larger institutions like the University of Minnesota where its libraries’ SAT funded digitization efforts were recognized by the Digital Public Library of America as a national leader.

- At the time, most of the SAT projects were launched, there were no standards or best practices in audio and film preservation, as well as for digitization of documents, photographs, and collections. With an SAT award, the Smithsonian Institution and the Library of Congress with the help of experts created the first standards for the preservation of sound recordings in 2000. Receiving SAT grants motivated many of the organizations to work with like-minded institutions to develop workflows, guidelines, and best practices that became professional standards.

- The SAT projects had a profound professional development effect on many of the staff involved in those projects. Many respondents described the SAT project as their institutions’ foray into the digital environment. Few, if any, staff had significant experience with digital technology, and by working on the SAT projects, staff re-oriented their professional responsibilities toward access, moving away from an earlier focus on collection building. Many described this process as one of the most significant influences on personal careers.

- All of the case studies reveal how vulnerable collections, artifacts, documents and artistic works are to being lost. For instance, SAT allowed the University of Houston to rescue an entire category of books and materials from obscurity all of which are foundational to Hispanic Literary Heritage in the US.

## Recommendations

The partnership between SAT and the American Architectural Foundation, developed in 2014, has yielded important results. Thanks to the AAF staff's efforts, there is now a single list of all of the grants that have been made through the SAT program along with a record of the matching private funds that have been contributed to the projects.

Although funding for Save America's Treasures was suspended in 2010, the partnership between the National Park Service and AAF has led to a renewed commitment to working with legislative leaders to fund the program. As of this writing, SAT will shortly announce its first request for applications for funding in six years. Among the lessons and recommendations from the first ten years of the program:

- 1) The historical record of these grants is important. While only a limited number of institutions receive federal funding, many organizations can benefit from knowing what they accomplished, what was required, and the lessons they learned. The benefits derived from external funding can be greatly amplified if attention is paid to communicating results.
- 2) The Federal Partners should agree on to set up one database for maintaining records of the grant program. Even though four separate agencies have responsibility for funding grant initiatives, it would be helpful to have a single agency charged with collecting reports and preserving them. Even though the original Save America's Treasures program is relatively recent, finding documentation of the grants was extremely difficult. Part of the federal responsibility should be to make information about grant results accessible so that others can benefit.
- 3) Evaluation of impact is a necessary part of the program. In the earlier iteration of the program, there were no requirements for assessing the influence the grants had on the institutions or the broader community. It has been difficult to discern impact as we developed case studies. In the future, having such a requirement would encourage institutions to be more intentional in developing projects that pay more attention to the impact they might have on education or community development.
- 4) The American Architectural Foundation can play a valuable role in coordinating the program, facilitating discussions among funding agencies, and promoting collaborations among grant recipients.



# Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary

July 5, 2017

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## Organizational Context

The Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary was a private, non-profit alliance established to mark the three-hundred-year anniversary of Benjamin Franklin's birth (1706-2006) with a celebration dedicated to educating the public about Franklin's enduring legacy and inspiring renewed appreciation of the values he embodied. The Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary represented a consortium created in 2000 by the American Philosophical Society, The Franklin Institute, the Library Company of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the University of Pennsylvania. The Tercentenary's projects formed the official national celebration for America's first founding father to reach 300.

## The SAT grant and its impact

Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary

Philadelphia, PA

SAT award of \$300,000, matched by funds contributed by the Pew Foundation.

National Endowment for the Humanities

Grant period: 2003-2005

Contact: Page Talbott, Associate Director, and Chief Curator, Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World

e-mail: [pagetalbott@gmail.com](mailto:pagetalbott@gmail.com)

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The Franklin Tercentenary project is an excellent example of a collaborative project. As the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Benjamin Franklin's birth approached, five leading cultural organizations in Philadelphia joined forces to create a celebratory exhibition and accompanying programming to mark the event. The Save America's Treasures grant made officially to the Library Company of Philadelphia in 2003 resulted in the conservation and rehousing of over 500 Franklin-associated items, including manuscripts, printed material, portraits, textiles, personal items, and inventions. The items were used in a major traveling exhibition, *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a*

*Better World*, which attracted 750,000 visitors from 2005 to 2008 as part of the international celebration of the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Franklin's birth.

The exhibition opened at the National Constitution Center (Philadelphia, PA) in December 2005 and then traveled to the Missouri History Museum (St. Louis, MO), the Houston Museum of Natural Science (Houston, TX), the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (Denver, CO), and the Atlanta History Center (Atlanta, GA), concluding with exhibitions at the Musée Carnavalet and the Musée des Arts et Métiers (Paris, France) in honor of Franklin's achievements as ambassador to France during the Revolutionary War.

The traveling exhibition featured around 250 historic artifacts associated with Franklin. They were drawn from the great collections of many leading institutions, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Franklin Institute Science Museum, Independence National Historical Park, the Annenberg Rare Book and Manuscript Library at the University of Pennsylvania, the American Philosophical Society, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Atwater Kent Museum of Philadelphia, the Library Company of Philadelphia, Rosenbach Museum and Library, Pennsylvania Hospital, and Historic Bartram's Garden. Visitors to the venues received a rare opportunity to see the unique first copy of the first 1733 Poor Richard Almanack, Franklin's own copy of the Declaration of Independence, his glass harmonica musical instrument, the only surviving stove plate from an original Franklin Stove, and the Electrical Machine that Franklin built to perform his groundbreaking science experiments.

## Work Accomplished

This multi-year, multi-institutional project consisted of many complicated moving parts. A separate temporary organization, the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary, was created to manage the project. The five founding organizations worked with other cultural organizations in Philadelphia to assemble all of the materials that formed the exhibit. In addition to preserving and conserving the 500 artifacts that formed the exhibit, the Tercentenary developed a traveling panel exhibit that was featured in 40 public libraries in 31 states.

While not directly supported by the grant, the exhibition catalog, *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World*, edited by Page Talbott and published by Yale University Press, celebrated many of the items conserved through the Save America's Treasures grant. It is a handsome 396-page hard-cover coffee table book with essays by Walter Isaacson, Edmund S. Morgan, Ellen R. Cohn, James N. Green, E. Philip Krider, Emma J.

Lapansky-Werner, J. A. Leo Lemay, Robert Middlekauff, Billy G. Smith, and editor Page Talbott. The book includes numerous color photographs of the items conserved for the exhibit.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Conservators at Philadelphia's Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) were responsible for overseeing the conservation treatment and re-housing of the majority of items involved in this project. CCAHA staff treated and rehoused most of the manuscript and printed materials. CCAHA managed work by paintings conservator Steven Erisoty, objects conservator Kory Berrett, and furniture conservator Tom Heller, and the conservation laboratory at Winterthur assisted with work on some textiles.

*A few of the many conservation treatment highlights included:*

- CCAHA conservators treated a handwritten copy of Franklin's notorious essay *Advice to a Young Man on the Choice of a Mistress*; both handwritten and printed versions of his famous anecdote *The Whistle*; *Some Account of the Pennsylvania Hospital*, a book written and published by Franklin which describes the founding of Pennsylvania Hospital, the nation's first hospital; the only contemporary surviving portrait of Polly Stevenson, daughter of Franklin's English landlady and a lifelong friend; *Proposal for Education of Youth*, a pamphlet by Franklin that summarizes his ideas for the founding of the University of Pennsylvania; selected Franklin almanacs from the Rosenbach Museum and Library; a contemporary drawing of Franklin by Jacques-Louis David; and a "Dunlap broadside" first printing of the *Declaration of Independence*.
- Paintings conservator Steven Erisoty worked on a portrait of David Rittenhouse by Charles Willson Peale; *Franklin Urging the Claims of the American Colonies Before Louis XVI* by George Peter Alexander Healy; a Rembrandt Peale portrait of Joseph Priestley; and portraits of Benjamin Franklin and Benjamin Rush by noted colonial portraitist Thomas Sully.
- Furniture conservator Tom Heller worked on a Franklin-designed library chair with folding steps from the American Philosophical Society; a lap desk and armchair from the Franklin Institute; a drop-leaf dining table from the Atwater Kent Museum of Philadelphia; and the "Blue Ball," a painted wooden ball that served as the original shop sign of Franklin's father, Josiah Franklin, a candle maker.
- Objects conservator Kory Berrett treated the only surviving Franklin stove plate; a Franklin-designed odometer that helped him in his work as Postmaster

General; a punch keg and stand; an inkstand; an English tankard; a lead rule cutting machine; a composing stick; and a four-sided whale-oil street lamp, circa 1800, in a style originally designed by Franklin.

## The Importance of the Grant

Without a grant to establish a coordinating body, this highly complicated, multi-year, multi-institutional project could not have been accomplished. Once the Tercentenary was established, a staff was hired and additional funds were secured, including Congressional approval to create a commemorative medal that was sold to raise funds. The exhibits touched thousands of people. All of the participating institutions now have materials that are preserved according to the highest archival and artistic standards. The website developed by the Tercentenary continues to be publically available and widely used by students, teachers, and the general public.



# Cornell University: Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections

*July 10, 2017*

*Deanna Marcum/ Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org*

## Organizational Context

The Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, located in the Carl A. Kroch Library, is Cornell's principal repository of rare books, manuscripts, and archival materials in the fields of history, literature, music, the arts, science, natural history, and technology. With more than 500,000 volumes and 70 million manuscripts, photographs, and other artifacts, the Rare and Manuscript Division features collections spanning 4,000 years, from cuneiform tablets to comic books. The Division is also home to Cornell University's Archives.

## The SAT grant and its impact

Cornell University

Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections

2B Carl A. Kroch Library

Ithaca, NY 14853

SAT award: \$331,000; matched with in-kind contributions from the library

National Endowment for the Humanities

Grant period: 1999-2002

Contact: Katherine Reagan

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Telephone: 607-255-3530

Cornell University was founded in 1865. The youngest of the "Ivy League" schools, it was founded on principles of equal access to education on any subject; for any gender, race, ethnicity, or nationality; for those of any religion, or no religion. Cornell's first president, Andrew Dickson White, was a historian and a book collector who believed that primary sources—historical artifacts—were essential for teaching and research. In 1870, President White made a commitment to preserve and make accessible the papers and documents of the anti-slavery movement. That same year, the extensive library of White's friend, abolitionist Samuel J. May of Syracuse, New York, arrived at the new university. May's collection included more than 10,000 pamphlets, newspapers, and other materials on

the history of slavery and the anti-slavery movement. News of the arrival of Samuel May's collection at Cornell spread, and in 1874 the abolitionists William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Gerrit Smith, wrote, signed, and circulated an appeal to their friends and supporters in America and Great Britain, urging that it was of "great importance that the literature of the Anti-Slavery movement...be preserved and handed down, that the purposes and the spirit, the methods and the aims of the Abolitionists should be clearly known and understood by future generations." The effort was successful, bringing in further scarce and original manuscripts and publications, allowing the Cornell Library to develop an Anti-Slavery collection that is unique for its depth and coverage.

One of Cornell University Library's oldest collections, on a subject of critical historical interest and importance, by the 1990s it was widely acknowledged that the May Anti-Slavery Collection was in need of physical stabilization and improved access via enhanced cataloging and digitization.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

The collection of pamphlets, ranging from the early 19th century through the Civil War, were bound in mid-19th century three quarter sheep bindings which were deteriorating. An assessment by Cornell's conservators determined that some pamphlets were threatened by the acidity of the paper and iron gall ink. Some of the pamphlets have paper that is porous, indicating poor sizing, and many were stained and soiled through use and the absorption of pollutants over the last century. The grant provided funding for full conservation treatment to restore these items to a useable state for current and future scholars requiring access to the original artifacts, along with rehousing in new pamphlet boxes.

The collection has never been appraised to determine its fair market value. Its cultural and historical value is enormous. The vast content of Cornell's Samuel J. May Anti-Slavery Collection enables the study of how legal, religious, moral, and economic debates over slavery influenced the development of the United States over the course of the 19th century, along with the dimensions of the single most important human rights challenge of our times – a challenge that continues to cause strife and division to this day.

Project catalogers entered information from original catalog cards for the Anti-Slavery Collection into Cornell's online catalog, upgrading records with additional subject headings and copy-specific information.

Conservation treatment included mass de-acidification of printed books and pamphlets, individual cleaning, repair and resewing, and rehousing in new boxes.

Digitization occurred in tandem with conservation treatment to protect originals while ensuring full capture of the text, illustrations, annotations, markings, and embossments. Optical character scan (OCR) and encoding provided for full-text searching of the digital images.

At the start of the project, 500 bound volumes containing approximately 10,000 pamphlets were sent to Preservation Technologies for mass de-acidification using Bookkeeper®, a patented process that neutralizes harmful acids by suspending the books in an inert liquid (a blend of non-toxic, fluorinated materials), and dispersing microscopic buffer materials (magnesium oxide).

Upon their return, cataloging and conservation work was carried out by Cornell Library catalogers and staff in Cornell Library's Conservation Unit.

## The Importance of the Grant

Cornell Libraries continues to maintain a publicly available website:

<http://dlxs.library.cornell.edu/m/mayantislavery/>.

A major exhibition on the Anti-Slavery movement was created in 2003. Materials treated by the grant continue to receive constant use: in multiple subsequent exhibitions, in hundreds of classroom presentations, and through the publicly available, full-text searchable database online.

The grant ensured preservation of one of the nation's oldest and most significant collections on the history of the Abolitionist Movement, one of Cornell's oldest and most heavily used and important collections.

This Save America's Treasures grant enabled not only the preservation of a significant, landmark collection on the history of slavery and abolitionism, but also provided an early model of a full-text digitization project which still receives active and constant use world-wide to this day.

Without the grant, the materials would be much less visible, and they would not be available for study and use by both academic communities and by the public at large. Additionally, some of the originals were in danger of further deterioration due to acidic paper and inferior, unstable housing.

Libraries, archives and museums provide an essential role in advancing both public education and academic research. Artifacts of all types, and their survival, are at center

of this critical role. The survival of historically important research collections determines what the present and the future can know about the past.



# Crow Canyon Archaeological Center

*August 23, 2017*

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## Organizational Context

The Crow Canyon Archaeological Center is a non-profit organization with a mission to empower present and future generations by making the human past accessible and relevant through archaeological research, experiential education, and American Indian knowledge.

The Center was established in 1967 by high school teacher, Edgar Berger, as a hands-on educational program for his students in the suburban Denver area. He collaborated with Dr. Art Rohn from Wichita State University to provide graduate students to teach and supervise high school students doing original research excavating ancient pueblo sites.

Since its foundation, the mission of Crow Canyon has been to preserve and protect the rich heritage of the ancient Pueblo Indians (or Anasazi) of the American Southwest and to educate the public of the need to preserve and protect archaeological resources. Archaeological research has been conducted in the Mesa Verde region with the goal of teaching archaeology through hands-on experience.

## SAT Grant and its Impact

Crow Canyon Archaeological Center  
Cortez, CO

SAT grant: \$65,000, matched with \$65,610 from institutional funds

Institute of Museum and Library Services

Grant period: 2002-2005

Contact: Mark D. Varien, Director of Research

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The Crow Canyon Archaeological Center collections, including artifacts and documentary materials, derived from the excavation of two archaeological sites, Yellow Jacket and Shields, in Colorado, that needed to be curated, and the center did not meet

federal curation standards for protection from humidity, flooding, temperature fluctuations, pest infestation, and security. The Yellow Jacket pueblo, based on archeological evidence, was the center of a community, and includes the presence of public architecture at the site: a probable great kiva, a possible Chacoan great house, two possible Chacoan roads, four possible plazas, several water-control features, and a canyon-rim complex that includes a bi-wall structure and encloses a spring. These structures and features were constructed over a span of approximately 220 years. The Shields pueblo's historical importance is associated with the faunal dataset that has been assembled by the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center and the rock art from that region.

The pueblos are adjacent to the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument and Hovenweep National Monument in an area with the highest density of prehistoric sites in America.

The documentation of the archaeological work carried out at these pueblos was housed at the center, but it had not been processed or preserved in a way that allowed other scholars to make use of the evidence that had been assembled.

The Save America's Treasures grant provided the staff resources necessary to process the collections and to identify a permanent home for the materials so that they could be used.

## Work Accomplished

No one currently at the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center was on the staff at the time the grant was in effect, and it is now impossible to determine what the work flow was. We know that the collections were processed and transferred to the Anasazi Heritage Center, where a professional staff could preserve and properly store the documentary records. College student interns and secondary school students who were enrolled in Crow Canyon's public education programs assisted the professionals with these activities, giving them a better understanding of why conservation and preservation of these collections is necessary.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

The Crow Canyon Archeological Center made a crucial determination that it had stewardship responsibility for historic materials that facilitated understanding of the deep history of America and the cultural evolution of human society. It responded to that sense of responsibility by securing funds to put the materials into a form that could be preserved and analyzed by subsequent generations of scholars and the interested public.

By transferring the processed materials to a better-resourced research center, the materials are permanently accessible.

## The Importance of the Grant

Since there are no records of the grant implementation, and since the staff responsible for the work are no longer at the Center, we can only surmise that the preservation work would not have been possible without the Save America's Treasures funding. Since the materials are now part of the Anasazi Heritage Center, it is safe to say that these materials contribute to the economic, intellectual, and educational benefits that flow from the Anasazi Center.



# Jacob's Pillow

*July 5, 2017*

*Deanna Marcum/ [Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org](mailto:Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org)*

## Organizational Context

Jacob's Pillow is the home of the nation's longest-running international dance festival. Located in the Berkshires of Western Massachusetts, Jacob's Pillow hosts an annual summer festival that draws more than 50 dance companies. The mission of Jacob's Pillow is to support dance creation, presentation, education, and preservation; and to engage and deepen public appreciation and support of dance.

In addition to the performances and public programs, Jacob's Pillow also maintains an archive of correspondence, photographs, programs, board minutes, books, costumes, posters, films, audiotapes, and scrapbooks.

## The SAT grant and its impact

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Inc.

Becket, MA

SAT award: \$59,000, matched with \$59,000 from the Delmas Foundation and internal funds

National Endowment for the Arts

Grant period: February 2010 – October 2013

Contact: Norton Owen, Archivist

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telephone: 413-243-9919, ext. 150

Norton Owen, Jacob's Pillow archivist, had always wanted to preserve the photographs he had stored over his decades-long tenure, but he had not found a way to fund such a project. He learned of the Save America's Treasure program when development staff brought it to his attention. In a closely collaborative effort, the archivist and the development staff selected the photographs that had been accumulating in hard copy since the 1930s as the focus of the SAT grant. They knew that the original photographs were heavily used by researchers, but they began to imagine many more uses of these materials that would be possible if they were made available digitally. Jacob's Pillow staff

had gathered documentation about the photographs over the years, but this information was not filed with the photographs themselves. The staff believed that if they could assemble a digital database that contained digitized photographs and the accompanying documentation and make it available to the broad public, the photographs would be much more valuable.

## Work Accomplished

The project resulted in the digitization of 10,500 photographic images that were then incorporated into a searchable database. The photographs range from snapshots to exhibition prints, all of varying levels of integrity. Some of the snapshots have faded with age, and the range of physical size of the photographs presented challenges. As the documentation had not been stored with the photographs, staff had to search many different locations to find and integrate the materials that explained the photographs into a single platform that would be easy for users to navigate. Although the intellectual property concerns about photographs are quite thorny, Jacob's Pillow has now added computer stations to its reading room so that every visitor can look at thousands of images that document the long and impressive history of Jacob's Pillow. But the photographs are not just limited to Jacob's Pillow. All of the photographs of dance companies that have performed there, and all of the documentation related to those dance companies, are now available in digital form. When copyright guidelines allow, these images are available to the public through the web site. Where there are copyright restrictions, the digital images are available on site to researchers and the visiting public.

The SAT grant was the impetus for far more than the digitization of thousands of photographs and accompanying documentation. Archivist Owen explained that the SAT project was the catalytic force for an entirely new strategy at Jacob's Pillow. As soon as the organization began to incorporate digital technology, the staff realized that the SAT grant was a building block toward creating a new public platform for its collections. Working with photographs helped them understand that all of the collections of Jacob's Pillow could be made more accessible to the public. The digital system is used for incorporating the materials into a findable system, developing finding aids to make discovery easier for the public, and for cataloging. With images in digital form and findable through an integrated system, all staff members have access to the corpus. Digitization has democratized access.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Jacob's Pillow's photographic collections had been maintained in hard form prior to the SAT award. The paper-based filing system was inefficient, and when there were two dancers in the same photograph, copies were filed in two separate artist-based files. Some of the photographs were in stable condition; some were not. Some were stored properly; some were not. The SAT grant made it possible for Jacob's Pillow to sleeve all of the hard-copy photographs and store them properly. Digital access to the images means that there is far less wear and tear on the originals. Metadata describing the photographs was brought up to professional standards, so finding materials is much easier than before. Jacob's Pillow staff augmented their own work with contract assistance from Chicago Albumen Works for putting photographs into preservation-quality sleeves so that they could be suitably stored.

## The Importance of the Grant

Archivist Owen reported that it is impossible to predict what would have happened to the photographs had Jacob's Pillow not received SAT funding because the system that was created for digitizing and making accessible the photographs has become the building block for all of their work. He said, "I can't imagine how we would have built all of the system we now depend upon or how we would have been able to use the photographs and provide access to them for researchers and the public. I can't imagine how we could have created the database that now underpins everything we do. The SAT grant is inextricable from today's daily work." He emphasized that Jacob's Pillow's archives is not an academic ivory tower. It is used. It is organic. The digital photographic collection allows researchers and the general public to interact with the collection immediately. They no longer have to go through a member of the staff to gain access. They can learn on their own.

The more readily accessible digital collection has also allowed Jacob's Pillow to connect to the K-12 community. The staff, with the encouragement of the new director, Pamela Tatge who joined the organization in January 2016, is seeking ways to work with teachers and their students to use the photographs and moving images from Jacob's Pillow in their own work.

The work of Jacob's Pillow is keeping dance heritage alive. In many ways, the organization serves as one of the primary stewards of dance in America, and to the degree that many international dance companies visit and perform at Jacob's Pillow, and the world.



# Library of Virginia: Thomas Jefferson's Gubernatorial Papers

*August 31, 2017*

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## Organizational Context

The Library of Virginia was created by the General Assembly in 1823 to organize, care for, and manage the state's growing collection of books and official records. It is somewhat unusual in that it is both the state archives and the state library. The materials in the collection date back to the early colonial period.

The library houses the most comprehensive collection of materials on Virginia government, history, and culture available anywhere. The collections include printed, manuscript, map, and photographic collections, many of which have been digitized and added to the institution's digital library.

## SAT Grant and its Impact

Library of Virginia

Richmond, VA

SAT award: \$110,000, matched by \$12,000 from the Library of Virginia Foundation, \$80,412 from the state in in-kind labor and digitization costs, and some grant funding. The total project costs amounted to \$223,412.

National Park Service

Grant period: July 2011 – December 2014

Contact: John Metz, Deputy of Collections and Programs

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Telephone: 804-692-3607

The Library of Virginia houses complete records of governors of the state from Patrick Henry up to the present day. All of these papers have state significance, but the gubernatorial papers of Thomas Jefferson have national significance. Included in the Jefferson collection are papers pertaining to the Revolutionary War, the opening of the Northwest Territory, relations with Native Americans—all of the topics that define our nation in its earliest phases.

The 2,000 manuscript pages of this collection were at risk, ironically, because one of the earliest preservation scientists had his laboratory at the Library of Virginia in the early 1950s. In the Barrow's Laboratory, William Barrow had determined that the best way to preserve important historical documents was to laminate them. Many years and much preservation research later, preservation specialists now know that lamination damages documents, and there are new techniques for removing the lamination so that the original documents can be properly preserved. The Library of Virginia had also microfilmed this collection in earlier years and had digitized images derived from the microfilm. These images had been mounted on the Library's web site for educational purposes, but everyone agreed that the images were far from acceptable as user-friendly materials. For all of these reasons, the Library of Virginia applied for an SAT grant so that it could reverse the Barrow's treatment, properly preserve the collection, and directly scan the originals so that the collection could be mounted online.

## Work Accomplished

All 2,000 pages of the collection had to be de-laminated, de-acidified, repaired, and stored in proper conditions. All of the materials were treated in-house because the collection is so valuable that the staff did not want it to leave the premises. After the collections had been treated, the materials were digitized to go onto the web site.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

By treating these materials, the records of Thomas Jefferson's tenure as governor—the records of the nation's earliest history—are available to the public. Their poor physical condition precluded making them available before. With direct digitization of these primary source materials, the images available on the web are of very high quality. The library was able to create a web portal that is easily accessible and it also created resource guides for teachers to make the materials immediately available for educational purposes.

The project director, in summarizing the importance of the collection said, "As an historian, I can think of few subjects short of Jefferson that speak to the essence of America. Records of his term of governor show the inner workings of government at that time. Few materials are more valuable or more evocative. We could not have done this without the grant opportunity."

## The Importance of the Grant

De-lamination is an intensive and dangerous process and poses dangers to the health of the conservators. The dangers were well understood, so the library had determined that it would treat items as they encountered laminated pages, but they had not treated materials on a large scale. The financial requirements of such intensive work were prohibitive without grant funding.

With SAT funding, the Library of Virginia was able to undertake this massive project, treat the entire collection, and think in new ways about how best to present the material for educational purposes. The library would have tried to treat single documents as they were discovered to be deteriorating, but probably could not have ever managed to treat the entire collection.



# Linda Hall Library

August 30, 2017

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## Organizational Context

Herbert and Linda Hall established a private library in Kansas City, Missouri so that “their wealth might build up an important cultural agency as a contribution to the city in which they made their home.”<sup>1</sup> Their \$6 million bequest established a free public library for the use of the people of Kansas City and the public generally. There were no requirements as to the type of library it should be, only that it be located on the grounds of their estate and that it be named for Linda Hall.

The five businessmen who made up the Board of Trustees hired consultants to determine what kind of institution should be built and ultimately decided on a science and technology library. They hired a scientist/librarian to lead the organization and opened the doors to the public in 1946. Today, the Linda Hall Library is the world’s foremost independent research library devoted to science, engineering, and technology. It is open to the public free of charge.

## SAT Grant and its Impact

Linda Hall Library

Kansas City, Missouri

SAT award: \$53,990, matched by \$48,719 from Linda Hall Library’s internal funds and \$5,271 from private donors

Institute of Museum and Library Services

Grant period: 2011-2013

Contact: Lisa Browar, President

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Telephone: 816-926-8733

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<sup>1</sup> *Kansas City Star*, October 15, 1945.

The A.B. Nichols Collection contains the original materials documenting the construction of the Panama Canal from the beginning of U. S. participation in the project through completion. A. B. Nichols was an American engineer sent to the Canal Zone in 1900 when the Americans took over construction from the French. Nichols was one of the few Americans to remain on the project until its completion in 1914. During his time in the Canal Zone, he wrote diaries and kept maps, photographs, clippings letters, memoranda, and other ephemera that provide a comprehensive account of life in the Canal Zone during these years as well as the construction history of the Panama Canal.

The collection had been in poor storage conditions before it was acquired by the Linda Hall Library, and the grant was sought to stabilize and preserve the collection.

## Work Accomplished

The collection was sufficiently compromised that its long-term future was in question. The collection needed a variety of conservation/preservation treatments including de-acidification, cleaning, flattening, tissue repairs, and re-housing. The entire collection was sent to the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia. The highly-specialized nature of the preservation needs called for a variety of preservation experts.

The Linda Hall Library was planning an exhibition for 2014-2015 to coincide with the centennial of the Panama Canal. The collection was being examined while planning for centennial events, and the staff determined that the materials were too unstable for use either as a research resource or to be placed on exhibit.

After materials were properly conserved, they were a central feature of the exhibit. A web site for the exhibit was created: "The Land Divided, the World United: Building the Panama Canal." It can be accessed at [panama.lindahall.org](http://panama.lindahall.org).

The exhibition was accompanied by a lecture series with all of the videotaped lectures available at [lindahall.org](http://lindahall.org).

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

The Linda Hall Library was the only North American institution to acknowledge the centennial of the Panama Canal on a large scale. This brought attention to the centennial, but also to the library that had heretofore been known as a highly-specialized repository meeting the needs of engineers and members of the scientific professions. The

exhibition ignited a chain of events that helped raise the library's public profile and secure its place as a community/national cultural asset.

The President of Linda Hall noted that the exhibit was especially important in an era of disposable culture and electronic communication. The ability to see, touch, and learn from original materials is invaluable. Artifacts from the Nichols collection help anyone who comes in contact with them to begin to understand the lives of those who came before us, the circumstances in which they lived, and the progress that has occurred since. Cultural and historic artifacts lend perspective to contemporary life.

## The Importance of the Grant

The SAT grant allowed the Linda Hall Library to preserve and make accessible one of its great collections. Without the SAT grant, much less preservation would have been accomplished because the available funds were insufficient to treat the entire collection. The inability to use the entire collection as source material for the exhibition (as well as to display portions of it) would have been compromised, thereby altering the scope and content of the exhibition. The long-term effects of not preserving the entire collection would have meant the continued deterioration and eventual destruction of irreplaceable items.

The SAT grant also benefitted the Kansas City Metropolitan Region. Through the exhibit, members of the community gained a new-found, in-depth understanding of the history of the Panama Canal, its importance in world events, and its current importance in international commerce, travel, and security. Several other Kansas City-based organizations joined the centennial observance with additional programs and exhibitions, including the Kansas City Public Library, the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, and Kansas City Public Television (KCPT).



# Gordon Parks Collection

*August 23, 2017*

*Deanna Marcum/ Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org*

## Organizational Context

The Meserve-Kunhardt Foundation is a New York State 501 (c) (3) organization with a mission to (1) to acquire, preserve, and protect historical materials including collections of historical photographs; (2) to establish, foster, and enhance the means and modalities of exhibiting other foundation's photographic archives; (3) to create multimedia educational content using photographic archives of the foundation and other sources; and (4) to promote a wide range of educational and learning opportunities, including producing educational materials related to the history of the United States. Its collections include the Meserve Kunhardt collection, Gordon Parks collection, Dorothy Meserve Kunhardt collection, and Ed Clark collection.

The Foundation is named for Philip B. Kunhardt, Jr., a former managing editor of LIFE magazine, and Frederick Hill Meserve, Kunhardt's maternal grandfather, who began collecting historical photographs and glass negatives in 1897, including rare photographs of President Abraham Lincoln. The Foundation's collection also includes the comprehensive archives of children's book author Dorothy Kunhardt.

The Foundation's programs aim to catalog and preserve the photographic collections in its stewardship.

## SAT Grant and its Impact

Meserve-Kunhardt Foundation

Pleasantville, New York

SAT award: \$68,000, matched with equipment funds from Nikon

National Endowment for the Arts

Grant period: 2009-2012

Contact: Peter Kunhardt, Jr. and Amanda Smith

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Telephone: (914) 238-6800

The SAT grant proposal was developed by Dyllan McGee, a film maker and founding executive director of the Meserve Kunhardt Foundation and the Gordon Parks Foundation. Her goal was to preserve the work of Gordon Parks, the first black photographer at LIFE magazine, who chronicled everything from the Civil Rights movement to gang life to the worlds of fashion and art.

The grant request was for \$98,621.33 to preserve 10,000 negatives and 3,000 contact sheets. SAT awarded a \$68,000 grant, so the scope of the project had to be modified, but the Foundation was able to preserve 4,000 photographic prints and 20,000 negatives from the Gordon Parks collection. Most importantly, the grant made possible the digitization of these materials.

## Work Accomplished

The staff concentrated on the signature photographs of Gordon Parks. The first task was to inventory the collection and select the negative strips that would receive priority for scanning. The negatives were in good physical condition, but the Foundation wanted to capture the material digitally.

With grant funds, the Foundation was able to scan approximately one-quarter of the negative strips, along with 4,000 prints. High-resolution scanning was done in house, and lower resolution images that are not suitable for publishing have been mounted on the Foundation's web site for public access.

The Foundation is housed at the State University of New York (SUNY) Purchase Library. Nikon provided funds for scanning equipment that was used for the work. The Foundation hired a cataloger to process the negatives, which was a complicated task. The negatives had been kept in Parks' apartment and were in disarray. The cataloger sorted, arranged, and provided metadata for the negatives so they could be retrieved after scanning.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Gordon Parks' photographs are well known, but the negatives had not been used very often. Scanning the negatives opened these materials to the world of scholarship. The heavy use of the materials has encouraged the Foundation to seek additional funds to complete the scanning of the entire collection. The Foundation considers these negatives to be recovered histories of America, and by making them available, they are expanding the cultural makeup of the nation as a whole.

## The Importance of the Grant

The SAT grant provided public access to an important photographic collection. New research materials became available to the scholarly community and to the general public. A lesson learned from the project is that some of the images that are not as popular have proven to be even more valuable to scholars. The secondary images have important research value, and this has led to a decision to scan the entire collection.

The grant also encouraged greater collaboration with other institutions. Each year Gordon Parks' photographs are included in a major exhibition developed in collaboration with another institution, allowing the Foundation to tell a different story from the collection. The exhibits and publications of recent years include:

Gordon Parks: A Harlem Family 1967  
Studio Museum in Harlem, 2012

Gordon Parks: The Making of an Argument  
New Orleans Museum of Art, 2013

Gordon Parks: Segregation Story  
High Museum (Atlanta, GA), 2014

Gordon Parks: Back to Fort Scott  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2015

Invisible Man: Gordon Parks and Ralph Ellison in Harlem  
Art Institute of Chicago, 2016

Gordon Parks: The Flavio Story  
J. Paul Getty Museum / Ryerson Image Centre / Instituto Moreira Salles, 2017



# Michigan State University Libraries

July 20, 2017

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## Organizational Context

Michigan State University Libraries holds more than six million books, along with six million microforms, 193,000 journals, 240,000 maps, and 70,000 sound recordings in support of teaching and research. The notable special collections of Michigan State include the internationally recognized Africana Library, the Comic Art Collection, the Cookery and Food Collections, and the Turfgrass Information Center, among others.

The University Libraries focused on its Early American Schoolbook Collection for the Save America's Treasures grant. The collection of 5,000 school books from the 19<sup>th</sup> century are housed in the libraries' special collections division. Among these are 163 "Sunday school books" that address religious instruction for youth, published in the U.S. between 1815 and 1865. Materials include texts used by Methodists, Baptists, Mormons, and other denominations and are searchable by subject, author, title, and keyword.

## SAT grant and its impact

Michigan State University Libraries  
East Lansing, MI

SAT award: \$114,060, matched with \$139,630 from the Libraries' internal budget.

National Endowment for the Humanities

Grant period: February 2005–2008

Contact: Eric Alstrom, Head of Conservation and Preservation

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Michigan State University Libraries' Special Collections contains a highly prized collection of 5,000 school books and Sunday School books from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As this collection is unique among research libraries, it has been heavily used over time. The paper used for producing these materials was often acidic, and the books, consequently, are not in good condition.

School books of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were notable not only for their didactic value, but also for their emphasis on ideas, behaviors, and morals that should be taught to all American children. The school books had been collected in part to support the curriculum of the School of Education. Some of the books had been used by students and then donated to the University Libraries. Others came as gifts from alumni or were purchased by the Libraries. These materials were in different groupings within special collections, and the grant offered an opportunity to create a single, digital collection of these historically valuable materials.

## Work Accomplished

The grant proposal submitted to Save America's Treasures described five major project goals:

1. Create a database to track 1,500 books, their condition and conservation treatment needs, and their location during the course of the project;
2. Survey the text book and Sunday school book collections;
3. Perform conservation work on those books that need attention;
4. Create an exhibit, both in the library and online, to highlight the conservation work performed;
5. Promote the resources of the MSU Libraries and specifically the Teaching Young Americans collection.

All of these goals were met. The libraries had begun to survey the preservation condition of the school books before applying for the SAT grant and had completed an inventory of ten percent of the collection, enough to know that many of the older books were acidic. With the grant, the libraries completed the survey of the collection and sent 1,200 volumes to Bookkeepers, a book de-acidification facility in Pennsylvania, for treatment. The remaining 3,800 volumes received internal preservation treatment and repair. The libraries mounted a physical exhibit of the books once they had been preserved, and later, they turned the physical exhibit into an online exhibit that is still available on the libraries' web site-- <http://www.lib.msu.edu/exhibits/sat/grant.jsp>.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

This was primarily a preservation grant. Along with the condition description, at least three photographs of each book were taken before any treatment began. The three photos included the front cover, the back cover, and the spine. Given the scope of the SAT project, it took over a month to finish this photo documentation.

The historical significance of these books required the libraries to preserve as much of the books' original structure as possible. Since photographs were taken before, during, and after treatment, a future scholar or conservator will be able to see what the book looked like before its treatment as well as what the intended outcome was, even if the book is damaged again.

The real value of the grant is that all the books are now together in one place and constitute an amazing research resource. The cultural value of the collection is that it gives insight into how Americans were taught and how they learned during this time period. The collection documents how beliefs and ideas have changed over time. It also shows what has been added to or changed in the curriculum over a century.

## The Importance of the Grant

Preservation became a much more important feature of Michigan State University Libraries, as a result of the SAT grant. Surveying and preserving 5,000 special collections books was a new form of work for the libraries, and the staff necessarily developed efficient and effective workflows for carrying out the work. Working with IT staff, the librarians created a database, both to keep track of the preservation work underway and to tie images to the descriptions in the database. All of these skills proved to be highly valuable as the libraries made the transition from print to digital resources. This project was the precursor to digital humanities projects that are now routine for graduate students and library staff.

Eric Alstrom noted that if the libraries had not received the grant, the staff would have continued to keep the materials in a cool, low humidity environment, just to retard the rate of degradation. Damaged and highly acidic books would have been held together with string, and access to the materials would have been limited, if only to prolong the life of these fragile materials. The libraries would not have had the resources to carry out basic preservation functions on the books. With the grant, the libraries were able to de-acidify the books, keeping the original artifacts intact.

The school book collection documents how we lived in the past and provides great insights into American cultural formation. Preserving this collection was especially important because so few research libraries in the United States have made a concerted effort to preserve school books.



# Museum of Innovation and Science

August 27, 2017

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## Organizational Context

The Museum of Innovation and Science (miSci) was formerly the Schenectady Museum Association. Founded in 1934, it is the only science center in Tech Valley that offers a multimedia experience for visitors of all ages and serves school children from northeastern New York, western Massachusetts, and southern Vermont. The Suits-Bueche Planetarium at miSci houses the only GOTO Star Projector in the northeast and is an official NASA Space Place. miSci's Archives include an extensive GE Photograph collection, with more than 1.6 million prints and negatives; an archival collection with more than 3,500 cubic feet of historic materials; and more than 15,000 objects relating to the history of science and technology. miSci's Archives houses an 1878 Edison tinfoil: the second oldest documented Edison tinfoil recording and the oldest playable American voice.

## SAT Grant and its Impact

Museum of Innovation and Science

Schenectady, New York

SAT award: \$25,735, matched by in-kind cost sharing by the institution

National Endowment for the Humanities

Grant period: February 2011-February 2013

Contact: Chris Hunter, Vice-president for Collections and Exhibitions

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Telephone: 518-382-7890, ext. 241

The Museum of Innovation and Science holds a recording created in St. Louis, Missouri, on June 22, 1878, using Thomas Edison's tinfoil phonograph technology. It is America's oldest playable sound recording. The tinfoil was donated to the museum in 1978. It was so fragile, that even if the staff had access to a compatible tinfoil phonograph, the act of playing it on an original phonograph would have destroyed the sound artifacts on the recording and would probably have torn through the original object. The purpose of the SAT grant was to engage Carl Haber and Earl Cornell, leading scientists at the Lawrence

Berkeley Laboratory in scanning of wax cylinders and vinyl recording, to assist with the preservation of this historically significant artifact.

The primary problem was being able to hear the sound that was recorded on the tinfoil and to play and capture the sound through a non-contact method that would not damage the tinfoil. The secondary problem was that the tinfoil had been folded and laced in an envelope. Expert assistance was needed to unfold the tinfoil without damaging any of the sound artifacts.

## Work Accomplished

A local conservator, Gwen Spicer, unfolded and gently flattened the tinfoil and created a custom travel case for the artifact. Museum staff traveled to the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory to work with Carl Haber and Earl Cornell, who had already done ground-breaking audio preservation work by creating IRENE, a process that creates ultra-high resolution images of the audio groove structures of wax cylinders or vinyl recordings. They also engaged Rene Rondeau, an Edison historian with a replica of Edison's first phonograph, to make a test recording. That recording was used to test the scanning and computer processing.

In July 2012, curator Chris Hunter took the tinfoil to Berkeley, where it was scanned and rescanned and then processed over a two-week period. A 3D scan was created of the tinfoil. The tracks had to be mapped before a scan was processed through a custom-designed program by Earl Cornell. The resulting audio was then exported into Sound Forge. Over the two-week process, improvements were made to the software to account for the differences of the tinfoil from the wax recordings that had been scanned in the past.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

The SAT grant provided an opportunity to hear one of Edison's original phonograph demonstrations and to learn about his promotion process. The recording represents the beginning of the entire music recording industry.

The grant also accelerated the state of audio preservation. The scientists at Livermore Berkeley Laboratory had worked with preservation specialists at the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution to develop the IRENE machine that captured sound from unplayable wax cylinders and vinyl recordings, but they needed to adapt that technology to include tinfoil recordings. The Museum of Innovation and Science had other tinfoil recordings in its collections—one full recording and a couple of souvenir

scraps of recordings—that were previously unknown. The Edison recording project helped to advance knowledge of how these audio artifacts could be preserved.

## The Importance of the Grant

Without the SAT grant, the Edison tinfoil would have remained a curiosity that sat in its envelope at the museum. The curator pointed out that while the museum would have tried to find other sources of funding, it is very difficult to convince a private donor to fund the preservation of a single artifact.

The SAT grant gave the museum the ability to preserve and capture the sound from one of its most important artifacts. The timing of the grant—just as it transitioned from Schenectady Museum Association to the Museum of Innovation and Science—gave the museum international recognition for an important scientific advancement. It made the museum more visible to the broader community.

A website was created that provides information about the recording and the preservation process: <http://bio16p.lbl.gov/tinfoil/html>.

The museum sponsored a program and exhibit in October 2012 called Found Sound. Carl Haber was featured speaker, and the program garnered international media coverage. The tinfoil is currently featured in an exhibition about Thomas Edison and the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of General Electric. A new web exhibit will be created this year featuring the Edison tinfoil and the museum's collection of 1929-1930 experimental sound on film recordings of radio broadcasts.



# National Film Preservation Foundation

July 20, 2017

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## Organizational Context

The Library of Congress, at the request of Congress, undertook a study of the state of film preservation in the United States. The Library established a National Film Preservation Board to oversee the study and the writing of the report. Over four years, the Board held hearings across the country and conducted research to understand the magnitude of the film preservation problem.

The National Preservation Board issued its report in 1996, alerting Congress that film was deteriorating faster than the nation's archives could save them. The report, *Redefining Film Preservation: A National Plan*, recommended preservation strategies for dealing with the massive problem, increasing the availability of films for educational purposes, and creating a new federally chartered foundation to help public and nonprofit organizations to preserve America's orphan films and share them with the public.

The National Film Preservation Foundation began its operations in 1997. Congress has authorized funding for the National Film Preservation Foundation three times since then. The federal money that goes through the Library of Congress' budget to the Foundation is used exclusively for preservation of films. All operational funding is secured from other sources. The Foundation receives support from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the Film Foundation.

The Foundation's primary focus is on saving American films that would be unlikely to survive without public support.

## SAT grant and its impact

National Film Preservation Foundation

San Francisco, CA

SAT award: \$1 million, matched with \$1.213 million, mostly from in-kind resources and contributions from the Martin Scorsese Foundation

National Endowment for the Arts

Grant period: 1999-2002

Contact: Jeff Lambert, Executive Director

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telephone: 415-392-7291, ext. 3004

The National Film Preservation Foundation applied to the Save America's Treasures program for funds to support a program called Saving the Silents. The Foundation collaborated with other film archives—George Eastman House, Pacific Film Archive, University of California, Los Angeles, among others—to identify silent films that were on 15 or 18 mm nitrate or acetate film stock that were no longer viewable. The partners selected 67 historically significant silent films to be re-formatted and preserved so that they could be viewed by the public. The participating archives agreed to preserve the silent films in their custody and have the films travel to locations all across the country so that they could be viewed and enjoyed.

Another important aspect of the project was to develop the International Federation of Film Archives Treasures database. By working with international film archives to build a database of holdings, everyone could know where films were held. Many of America's earliest films are housed in international archives, with no known copies in the United States. In building the database, the National Film Preservation Foundation learned about the existence of American films and collaborated with international archives to preserve and make accessible copies of the obscure American silent films.

## Work Accomplished

Ultimately, 94 silent films were meticulously preserved. All of these films were made available for exhibition around the country. During the grant period, the National Film Preservation Foundation gave free access to the International Federation of Film Archives Treasures database to every state library in the United States

With the availability of silent films that could be shown to the public, the visibility of silent films and the history of early American filmmaking increased considerably. Silent

film festivals were hosted in Denver and San Francisco after the 94 preserved films became available.

Sixteen of the preserved films have no copyright restrictions and are freely available on the web for public use. Nineteen of the 94 films have been released on DVD through licensing deals the custodial archives have made with vendors.

Perhaps the most important accomplishment of this project is that it ushered in a new area of film archives working together. Sharing material among them became a much more common activity, and that collaboration has continued ever since. As a result, the profile of silent films is considerably more prominent.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Most of the partnering archives had limited experience with film preservation when this project began. Digital technology raised as many questions as it answered, and the copyright issues associated with film are especially complicated, so there were many questions about the best way to bring to life the early silent films that were essentially unknown to the public. The collaboration of key film archives helped develop the standards and best practices for film preservation. Most importantly, the SAT project highlighted the enormous loss of America's film legacy. Film studios, believing that silent films were too removed from modern consciousness to have contemporary value, had discarded or allowed to deteriorate beyond use many silent films. Of all of that were ever created, only 20 percent have survived.

The Library of Congress report on film preservation coincided with the work carried out by the National Film Preservation Foundation, and the result was a heightened awareness of the importance of film preservation across the country.

## The Importance of the Grant

The SAT grant literally brought some of the earliest silent films back to life. The films that were preserved through the grant included the earliest films of Thomas Edison, D. W. Griffiths, and Cecil B. DeMille. These films that were created in the earliest days of the 20<sup>th</sup> century shaped the way that American films have been made over time. The nation's cultural legacy is as dependent upon film preservation as it is on print preservation.

The importance of the grant to the National Film Preservation Foundation cannot be overstated. Executive Director Jeff Lambert commented that "The validation of the SAT grant allowed us to preserve films that would then be widely accessible. It also helped us

establish a project manager for the archive. We were able to go to foreign archives and preserve their American holdings. It set a model we could work with for methods of communication and providing project updates to our partner institutions.”

The grant came in the early years of the Foundation’s existence. It boosted the profile of the Foundation enormously, and it provided a rationale for the most influential film archives to work together. At the time of the grant, the Foundation had not yet received federal funding, but the evidence that the Foundation could work with other institutions to do important and impactful work no doubt contributed to the achievement of federal funding.



# Pennsylvania State Archives

*August 30, 2017*

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## Organizational Context

The Pennsylvania State Archives is the official archive for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, administered as part of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Located in Harrisburg in the State Capitol Complex, the archives works closely with the state library to collect and preserve the documentary record of the state. As the Archives explains on its web site, its collections are best used for military records, naturalization records, vital records, ship lists, census records, prison records, mine accidents, land records, county records, and Pennsylvania railroad voluntary relief cards.

The Pennsylvania State Archives has been a leader nationally in making its records available online. Its electronic database, Archives Records Information Access System (ARIAS), currently contains more than 1.5 million government records.

## SAT Grant and its Impact

Pennsylvania State Archives

Harrisburg, PA

SAT award: \$375,000, matched by \$450,000 from the Pennsylvania General Assembly National Endowment for the Humanities

Grant period: November 2005 – July 2009

Contact: David Shoff

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The Pennsylvania Civil War Muster Rolls record important information about some 362,000 Pennsylvania citizens who served in the Civil War. Only New York State contributed more Union soldiers to the Civil War effort than Pennsylvania. As the Civil War came to a close in 1865, the Adjutant General's Office had responsibility for all of the attendant documentary paperwork of war, including the Muster In Rolls (entry of soldiers into service), Alphabetical Rolls, Lists of Deserters, and Muster Out Rolls (status

of soldiers at the completion of their service). In essence, these were the state's Civil War database, all prepared and organized by hand.

For many years following the Civil War, the Muster Out Rolls had a highly practical purpose: they verified pension and veterans' claims. As time passed, these records became most important for historical and genealogical research. Because they had been used for practical purposes in the beginning, the documents were in very poor condition. Documents had been folded and re-folded. Well-meaning, but not skilled in preservation methods, state employees had used adhesive tape to hold documents together, and the paper was so acidic that it began to deteriorate badly.

The Save America's Treasures grant allowed the Pennsylvania State Archives to work with the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) in Philadelphia to treat and re-house the Pennsylvania Muster Out Rolls, as they were identified as the records in greatest need of preservation treatment.

## Work Accomplished

Conservators and technicians of the CCAHA worked for five years to preserve these valuable records. The treatment included removing the old, acidic mending tape that had been used in the past. All of the rolls came out of their tri-folded condition in older acidic cartons and were flattened, conserved, encapsulated and housed in archival quality, acid-free oversized folders.

In many cases the records were in fragments, and the CCAHA staff had to refit the documents back together so that they could be read.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Valeria Kremser, then technician at CCAHA and now on the staff of Book Conservation at the University of Pennsylvania, produced a short video of the preservation process that is highly instructive. See <https://vimeo.com/89007276>.

The video provides vivid images of the poor paper quality and the painstaking process of restoring the documents to usable condition. After preservation treatments, the documents were digitized and made freely accessible on the web.

## The Importance of the Grant

The grant was influential in allowing greater public access to the collection. Because the muster rolls were all tri-folded in boxes and were opened and re-folded many times over the 140 years since they were created, many of them had become brittle and broken and subsequently unusable. After the grant was competed, patrons looking to do research into this collection were afforded the opportunity to use the original records without fear of doing worse damage to the collection. Many rolls that were in pieces were professionally reassembled which also made many of the records usable as a whole for the first time in many years. The impact upon public usability was significant.

The State Archives had neither the staff expertise nor the funds to carry out the complicated and time-consuming task of preserving and re-housing these important historical sources. The SAT grant proved to be a good way of encouraging the General Assembly to match the federal funding to carry out the work. The grant also proved to be important to encourage private donations from foundations and individuals that allowed the Archives to take the next step of digitizing the collection to make it widely accessible. These records are now available to researchers and genealogists everywhere.



# Smithsonian Institute: Historic Sound Recordings

*July 10, 2017*

*Deanna Marcum/ Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org*

## Organizational Context

The Smithsonian Institution, established in 1846 "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge," is a group of museums and research centers administered by the US government. The collections number more than 154 million items, and the aggregation of museums attract 30 million visitors, annually.

The National Museum of American History has about 400 of the earliest audio recordings ever made. These recordings were created using a variety of methods and materials such as rubber, beeswax, glass, tin foil, and brass, as the inventors tried to find a material that would hold sound. They date from the first decades of sound recording and reproduction, from 1878 to 1898.

The American Folklife Center was established at the Library of Congress through an act of Congress in 1976. The Center includes the Archive of Folk Culture that was established to collect American folk music in 1928.

## The SAT grant and its impact

Smithsonian Institution

Historic Sound Recordings

Washington, DC

SAT award: \$750,000 matched with \$773,524 from the History Channel, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Recording Academy

National Park Service

Grant period: 2000-2002

Contact: Richard Kurin, Acting Provost and Under Secretary for Museums and Research

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The Smithsonian Institution holds many of the earliest sound recordings ever made in the United States, and the staff was struggling with the best methods of preserving these materials that were disappearing before their eyes. Recordings were on wax cylinders, acetate tape, wire, and other media. The Smithsonian placed a high premium on preservation of its collections, but in the late 1990s, it was not clear what medium was best suited for sound recording preservation. Smithsonian staff knew that the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress was dealing with the same concerns about its historic sound recordings. These two government agencies took the unusual step of joining forces to ensure that America's sound recording heritage could be saved.

Through collaboration, the Smithsonian and the American Folklife Center rescued and preserved 8,000 sound recordings that contained the earliest recordings of Pete Seeger and Woodie Guthrie and the voice of Alexander Graham Bell. These American treasures are now available for the public to hear. Perhaps even more important, though, is the ongoing collaboration of two premier agencies that have responsibility for the nation's cultural heritage. The Smithsonian and the Library of Congress collaborate on setting preservation priorities and carrying out preservation research that benefits all cultural institutions.

## Work Accomplished

Both the Smithsonian and the American Folklife Center identified their most important historic sound recordings that were at greatest risk. The Save America's Treasures grant proposal, jointly developed by Richard Kurin of the Smithsonian and Margaret Bulger of the Library of Congress, included a split of \$465,000 for the Smithsonian and \$285,000 for the American Folklife Center. The Smithsonian preserved 5,000 sound recordings and the Library of Congress preserved 3,000, all of high historical value.

The extra benefit of this collaborative grant is that the two agencies convened a group of experts from the sound recording and archival worlds to discuss the preservation standards that were appropriate for that time. In 2000, sound recording preservation standards did not exist. Engineers could not agree on the optimal size files should be in order to preserve the best sound quality. Sound recording experts were engaged in deep philosophical debates about exactly what should be preserved when dealing with sound recordings from the 1800s to the 1950s. Should the preserved copy remain true to the original recording with all of the scratchy sounds that characterized the early technology, or should the sound quality be brought up to contemporary standards?

By convening the nation's experts as advisors to the Save America's Treasures project, agreement on standards emerged, and sound preservation was embraced by cultural organizations across the country.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

The Smithsonian collected historic sound recordings through its efforts to document technological changes in the United States. The American Folklife Center automatically receives folklife sound recordings through the Copyright Office's deposit system when the artist submit their work for copyright protection. Beginning in the 1930s, the Library sent folklife specialists into the field to record folk musicians performing in their homes and communities. John Lomax, and later his son Alan, are responsible for documenting the folk cultural heritage of the United States in the twentieth century.

Both institutions have tens of thousands of sound recordings in their custody. Although they knew that the media on which their sound recordings were stored were deteriorating, digital preservation techniques were too new for anyone to know the best way forward. By working together and working with expert engineers and archivists from across the country, standards and best practices were established and a plan to preserve recorded sound was developed. The highest priority collections were preserved during the grant period.

## The Importance of the Grant

The Save America's Treasures grant was critically important to both the Smithsonian and the Library of Congress in that they could use the funds to start the urgent project immediately without having to wait for Congressional budget hearings and the approval process. While both institutions had long been in the habit of making sound recordings available for research purposes, it was not until they began putting these materials on their institutional web sites that they realized the power of making these historical materials available to the general public. Both institutions have shifted their thinking, now believing that their most important mission is making their collections as widely accessible as possible. With the new strategy, collections are used by school children, their teachers, the general public, and the scholarly community.

An additional benefit of the SAT grant is that the History Channel became so interested in the project that it decided to produce a documentary film about the project. The film's broadcast gave the project a high level of visibility, and many musical artists became interested in the preservation work of the Smithsonian and the Library of Congress. The music community and the Recording Academy contributed time and money to the

project, and that involvement continues to this day. Richard Kurin believes that the public-private partnerships that developed through this project have had the greatest positive impact on the two federal agencies.

Kurin reported that both organizations have a responsibility to the nation to preserve as much of the cultural heritage as possible, so they would have struggled to save as much of the recorded sound collection as possible. He estimates that perhaps only one or two hundred recordings would have been saved by using internal funds. The SAT grant allowed them to tackle the preservation problem at scale and, most importantly, allowed them to bring outside experts to the table to help solve the problem. The reality of the SAT grant leveraged many more federal dollars over time, so the important work of saving the recorded sound heritage continues at both the Smithsonian and the Library of Congress.



# St. Louis Mercantile Library

August 19, 2017

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## Organizational Context

The St. Louis Mercantile Library, founded in 1846, is the oldest library west of the Mississippi. Like many mercantile libraries, St. Louis Mercantile Library was established by local civic leaders and philanthropists who wanted to create a cultural foundation for their city. The library's collections emphasize the westward expansion of the United States. The general collections number more than 210,000 books, along with thousands of rare and unique books, photographs, journals, and newspapers. In recent years, the Mercantile Library has undertaken a project to digitize gazetteers, directories, rosters, and guides, newspapers, and books.

The library continues to operate as a membership organization. Members have access to the entire collection of the University of Missouri Library. The Mercantile Library also features exhibitions and lectures for its members.

## SAT Grant and its Impact

St. Louis Mercantile Library

St. Louis, Missouri

SAT award: \$300,000, matched by \$154,708 from the institutional budget

National Park Service

Grant period: 2002-2006 (due to a no-cost extension)

Contact: Julie Dunn-Morton, Endowed Curator of Fine Art Collections

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Telephone: 314-516-6740

The St. Louis Mercantile Library applied for a Save America's Treasures grant to preserve a most unusual set of Audubon's Birds of America. The family of Audubon's wife lived in the St. Louis area, and they helped finance the production of the bird prints. The 400 prints in four elephant-folio volumes are unique in that they were not part of a subscription set. The prints were selected by Audubon as a gift to the family. The St. Louis Mercantile Library acquired the four volumes of prints, along with seven text

volumes that accompanied the prints, in the nineteenth century. Each volume included 100 iconic bird prints.

The SAT grant focused on the preservation needs of the prints. In the 1980s, the four volumes had been disassembled and rebound, according to the best preservation practice of the time. When the plates were re-bound, each plate was adhered to a material with the weight of artist canvas. The re-bound volumes were so heavy that it required four staff to move a single volume. The plates themselves were under great stress from this weight, and the volumes were not suitable for public display.

The Audubon prints are an especially important part of the collection, and the Library wanted to carry out contemporary preservation treatments that would allow public display of the treasures.

## Work Accomplished

In order to preserve the volumes, the preservation staff needed to disbind all of the volumes, treating each plate separately. Each plate was separated from the fabric liner it had been adhered to, cleaned by hand, and mounted on Japanese paper that included an additional border that served as a hinge, allowing the plates to be rebound as a book. This hinge method ensured that there would be no pressure on the page as it was turned in the book. The preservation experts took an additional step of building in an extra strip of Japanese paper so that they could attach a plate to another hinge, in case that was ever needed.

The preservation work was carried out by the New England Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) in Andover, Massachusetts, after a competitive bidding process. The Mercantile Library shipped one volume at a time to NEDCC and waited until the work on each was finished before shipping the next. In working with the first volume, a problem developed in which the Japanese paper began to curl. It was not discovered until a while after the volume had been returned, so work on volume two was paused until corrections could be made to the first volume. Preservation of all four volumes took four years.

The prints were not digitized because at the time of the grant, the Library did not have scanning knowledge or equipment. The cultural value was in preserving the volumes of plates as they had been created. Now that time has passed, several institutions have already scanned their copies of *Birds of America* and mounted them on their institutional web sites.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

The Audubon prints are a perfect exemplar of the Mercantile Library's history and mission. There are fewer than a dozen complete sets of *Birds of America* that were not part of a subscription set worldwide. The added value is that these volumes came through the Audubon family and illustrate the connection of the work to the local history of St. Louis. The Library proudly claims that its set, a wonderful combination of book and art, provides a cultural history that no other institution has.

Audubon's bird prints uniquely show how people of his generation learned natural history, and the Library's volumes illustrate how natural history was studied and displayed.

Bringing the volumes into compliance with modern-day preservation practices means that the volumes can once again be on public display. The Audubon prints are a perpetual favorite among Library members, and their connection to local history means that there is almost always one volume on public view at the Library.

## The Importance of the Grant

The St. Louis Mercantile Library is a small, membership organization. If it had not received the SAT grant, it would not have been able to afford the preservation work required for the Audubon volumes. The library staff believes that finding individual donors to meet the preservation challenge would have been absolutely impossible.

The Library has used the example of the Audubon *Birds of America* to inspire members to preserve other historic and cultural artifacts. Once a year, the Library mounts an "adopt a painting" program. Benefactors are encouraged to provide funds for new acquisitions and preservation of the existing collections.

The Library has developed a longer-term preservation plan, and the staff maintains a triage list that establishes preservation needs and priorities. The preservation of the Audubon prints is noted every time a volume is on exhibit with a sign that reads "Gratefully preserved through a grant from Save America's Treasures."



# Tufts University: Edward R. Murrow Collection

*August 27, 2017*

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## Organizational Context

Tufts College was founded in 1852 in Medford, Massachusetts. It became Tufts University in 1954. Organized into ten schools that include two undergraduate and eight graduate divisions, the university is best known for its internationalism and study abroad programs. Its Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy is the nation's oldest graduate school of international relations.

Tisch Library, the main library on campus, serves general information needs, while three smaller libraries serve specialized fields: Edward Ginn Library (Fletcher School), the Hirsh Health Sciences Library, and the Webster Library (veterinary medicine).

## SAT Grant and its Impact

Tufts University

Boston, MA

SAT award: \$58,783, matched by gift from Iron Mountain Entertainment Services

National Endowment for the Humanities

Grant period: 2010-2012

Contact: Christopher Barbour, Curator of Rare Books

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Telephone: 617-627-2398

Edward R. Murrow was a well-known CBS broadcaster during the formative years of American radio and television news programs. Murrow was stationed in London from 1937-1946, and while there formed a group of news correspondents known as the Murrow Boys, all men with the exception of Mary Marvin Breckenridge. This highly influential group of journalists set the standards for U. S. foreign news broadcasting with their World War II broadcasts. Murrow is synonymous with quality in journalism. He was a CBS broadcaster until 1961, when he became the director of the United States Information Agency. He died in 1965.

Murrow's papers were donated to the Tufts University Library by his widow in 1969 and cover the period from 1934 to 1965. The 55 linear feet of documents includes correspondence, personal materials, work and activities-related files, 320 photographs, 1700 books from his personal library, memorabilia, and audiovisual materials. Most of these materials are now housed at Tufts' Digital Collections and Archives.

At the height of the Cold War and the anti-communist campaign of Joseph McCarthy, Murrow launched his series, "This I Believe" as a trial program in Philadelphia. Murrow was concerned about the uncertainty and confusion that had grown out of current events in 1951. He wanted his radio program to be a remedy for that uncertainty, and the broadcasts generally concluded by offering inspiration and hope for a troubling and worrisome period in our history. The Philadelphia experiment was instantly popular, and by September 1951, the series was offered to radio stations in Boston, New York, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, and Washington. The requirements for the stations were that they would commit to a regular schedule to air the program and they would not accept any sponsorships for the program. Stations were encouraged to enhance the broadcasts by including essays from local citizens, and they were permitted to offer the print version of the broadcasts free to their local newspaper. The broadcasts were made freely available to the stations that agreed to these conditions.

## Work Accomplished

The SAT grant allowed Tufts staff to stabilize and digitize the nearly 200 reels of "This I Believe" essays in the Edward R. Murrow Collection. This work was key to stabilizing the original reels, repairing the damage from years of use, and creating high-resolution audio files to ensure that these voices can be preserved for future generations.

Grant funds from this program supported graduate students to work on identifying, transcribing, describing, and preparing the digital files for each essay for preservation and access online.

Six hundred individual essays are now online and publicly available.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Edward R. Murrow was a towering figure of journalism in an important historical period. Ordinary people wrote essays about what gave them hope during a time of uncertainty, and Murrow provided an introduction and wrap-up to each of the essays before they were distributed to local radio stations for airing. The broadcasts offer great insight into the

fears and hopes of Americans during the Cold War and the McCarthy era. Hearing their voices, not just reading their words, gives special meaning to the essays.

## The Importance of the Grant

Audio preservation expertise is not found in every library in the country, especially in mid-sized academic libraries such as the Tisch Library. Without the SAT grant, the library would not have been able to afford the specialized expertise needed to preserve the audio recordings. They needed to be cleaned, repaired, preserved, and digitized. The reassuring voice of Edward R. Murrow would have been lost to today's and future generations without the SAT funding.



# Poetry Magazine Archives

*August 14, 2017*

*Deanna Marcum/ Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org*

## Organizational Context

Poetry Magazine was founded in 1912 in Chicago by Harriet Monroe. Her aim was to create a literary magazine that would attract a wide audience. She determined that all poets selected for publication would be paid, and through this decision, she enhanced the status of poetry as a literary genre. In 1931, Monroe gave her poetry library, personal papers, and editorial files to the University of Chicago. Upon her death, the university received funds to establish the Modern Poetry Library room, where users could listen to recordings of poets reading their own works and read the literary manuscripts and correspondence between Monroe and the poets.

## SAT Grant and its Impact

Daniel Meyer

Director, Special Collections Research Center

University Archivist

University of Chicago Library

1100 E. 57th Street, Chicago, Illinois

SAT award: \$125,805, matched with \$133,760 internal and gift funds from the University of Chicago

National Endowment for the Arts

Grant period: 1999-2003

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Telephone: 773-702-8714

The University of Chicago Libraries learned about the Save America's Treasures program through its development staff. The archives staff thought that the program focused only on historic properties, and they were delighted to learn that collections proposals were welcome. The special collections division of the library received the Poetry Magazine archives in 1936 as a bequest of Harriett Monroe, the first editor. She gave to the Regenstein Library the magazine's archives, her personal book collection, and her personal papers. Monroe had maintained a close working relationship with the

University of Chicago's English department faculty and a personal relationship with Harold Swift, chairman of the University of Chicago Board of Trustees, who provided financial support for the magazine. The collection comprises 100 linear feet of shelving, housed in 174 archival boxes.

Alice Schryer, then head of special collections (now assistant director at the Newberry Library in Chicago) developed the grant proposal in response to her great concern about the preservation problems presented by the Poetry Magazine archives. The collection consisted of hundreds of thousands of letters between Harriett Monroe and poets. Many of the correspondents' letters were written on low-quality, acidic paper. Many of the documents in the collection are carbon copies, especially prone to degradation. Over the years, the letters, which are frequently consulted by researchers and students, were becoming worn and tattered, and the library was eager to stabilize the paper so that content would not be lost.

## Work Accomplished

At the time the grant was awarded, microfilming was deemed to be the most reliable form of preservation. Using internal staff, the entire Poetry Magazine collection was microfilmed. To ensure that the actual writings of poets from the first-half of the twentieth century, including Eliot, Pound, Williams, Moore, Yeats, Sandburg, Thomas, and Frost, along with Vachel Lindsay, Conrad Aiken, Wallace Stevens, Yvor Winters, Sara Teasdale, James Joyce, Edgar Lee Masters, Alfred Kreymborg, Ford Maddox Ford, Louis Zukofsky, Hart Crane, Witter Bynner, and Robert Penn Warren, among many others were preserved in a format that could be used by researchers, the library staff took all necessary steps to stabilize the paper and store the documents in a healthy preservation environment.

Special collections used the grant funds to hire an additional staff member who reviewed the entire collection of materials to be microfilmed. The staff member also worked with internal staff to rehouse the materials.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Archival preservation staff treated all of the documents to ensure that they could be used by researchers. All of the documents were housed in properly sized folders to prevent curling of the paper. Brittle pages were placed in clear plastic Mylar sleeves to reduce further deterioration. Since the sleeves added considerable bulk to the collection folders, the staff needed to shift and re-arrange, and then re-number, the collections. Since many of the files had been sorted in partially-filled boxes, the pages had curled. Staff removed

all of the documents, flattened the pages and rehoused them in appropriate boxes. All of the boxes of treated documents were stored in proper environmental conditions.

## The Importance of the Grant

Poetry Magazine was founded in 1912 in Chicago, and it was considered one of the most important poetry developments in the Western world. It first published T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, along with many other contemporary poets. In short, it is a literary landmark. The University of Chicago Library recognized the value of the collection, but found it extremely difficult to find an individual donor to support the physical rehousing and microfilming of the entire collection. The Save America's Treasures grant meant that the literary landmark could be treated and made widely accessible to scholars, students, and the public.

The Poetry Magazine archives project was funded on the cusp between microfilming and digitization. If the project were being carried out now, the collection would be scanned. At the time, however, microfilming was the accepted preservation method. Microfilm can also be scanned, so when funding allows, the library plans to convert the microfilm to digital format. The library contemplated converting the collection to digital form after the SAT grant ended, but learned that a commercial entity had negotiated with Poetry Magazine to digitize its back files. The University of Chicago collaborated with Brown University Library to put digitized poetry online. Chicago sent its pre-1923 volumes to Brown, where they were digitized and posted online. The Library staff credits the SAT grant with facilitating its transition from the microfilming to the digital era. They quickly recognized that while microfilm is an excellent preservation medium, they needed to focus on access, which is accomplished through digitization. This was the essential transition in the librarians' thinking that accounts for the emphasis on digitized collections today.

The content of the collection poses some special challenges for digitization. Many of the poets' estates still hold copyright of the literary manuscripts. The University of Chicago Libraries does not have the necessary financial resources to contact all of the families to secure permission to digitize the correspondence between editor Monroe and the poets.

Chicago has used the Poetry Magazine archives as the centerpiece of its bigger poetry collection. The Poetry Magazine collection attracted many other poetry collections, especially those collections that had a connection to Chicago. Special collections mounts four major exhibitions every year, and the poetry collection plays a central role in those exhibits.

The decision to microfilm the entire collection has inspired a library policy that when digitization is considered, entire collections, not just highlights, will be digitized.



# University of Houston: Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage

*July 10, 2017*

*Deanna Marcum/ Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org*

## Organizational Context

The University of Houston houses the Recovering the U. S. Hispanic Literary Foundation, which developed this international project to locate, preserve, and disseminate Hispanic culture of the United States in its written form since colonial times until 1960. The project has compiled a comprehensive bibliography of books, pamphlets, manuscripts, and ephemera produced by Latinos. The holdings available at the project include thousands of original books, manuscripts, archival items and ephemera, a microfilm collection of approximately 1,400 historical newspapers, hundreds of thousands of microfilmed and digitized items, a vast collection of photographs, an extensive authority list, and personal papers. In addition, the project has published or reprinted more than 40 historical books, two anthologies, and nine volumes of research articles. The project organizes a bi-annual international conference that attracts some five thousand affiliated scholars, librarians, and archivists. Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage Project is the premier center for research on Latino documentary history in the United States.

## The SAT grant and its impact

Recovering the U. S. Hispanic Literary Heritage

University of Houston,  
Houston, TX

SAT award: \$500,000, matched with \$500,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation and contributed time of participating institutions

National Endowment for the Humanities

Grant period: 1999-2005

Contact: Nicolas Kanellos, Brown Foundation Professor and Director of Arte Publico Press

e-mail: [nkanello@Central.UH.EDU](mailto:nkanello@Central.UH.EDU)

Telephone: 413-243-9919, ext. 150

Recovering the U. S. Hispanic Literary Heritage began as a scholarly effort to create a bibliography of Hispanic materials. A small group of professors combed through libraries' online catalogs to find the Hispanic materials housed in research collections. Scholars and bibliographers discovered that many of the Hispanic collections that had been acquired by libraries had not been cataloged, so they were on the shelves or in boxes in libraries, but few knew of their existence. They also discovered that many of these materials had been printed on acidic paper and were in grave danger of deteriorating.

Nicolas Kanellos, working with a small group of volunteers, wanted to identify these Hispanic materials and preserve them. He started the work in 1992, when he was inspired by Henry Louis Gates' project at the New York Public Library to identify African American periodicals. He resolved to undertake a Hispanic bibliography. At the time the project started, Kanellos and his staff thought that CD-ROM technology would be the best preservation method, but as they learned more about the digital technology that was just emerging, the scholars determined that they should microfilm the materials for preservation and digitize them for accessibility.

When they learned of the Save America's Treasures program, the project staff saw an opportunity to think about the work more holistically. Their proposal included identifying Hispanic books housed in U.S. repositories, creating MARC cataloging records for them so that they could be found in libraries' online catalogs, and simultaneously microfilming and digitizing the books for preservation and easy access.

The project rescued an entire category of books from obscurity. Hispanic materials found in U. S. libraries cover all topics and time periods, but because they are not English-language, they are often found in libraries' backlogs rather than on their shelves. Without cataloging records, they remain undiscovered. By identifying and making these books accessible, the project has made the Hispanic legacy of the United States available.

## Work Accomplished

The project worked with research libraries around the country to identify the Hispanic books that were in greatest danger of acidic paper deterioration and to digitize them. A massive database containing all of the identified titles is available through subscription services such as EBSCO and NewsBank. Through this public-private partnership, the project now includes books, newspapers, and other materials. The royalties from the subscription services allow the work to continue.

More than 50 university press books have been published based on the resources made available through the Recovery project. The bibliographers and scholars who have contributed to the project now meet every two years at the University of Houston in a conference focused on the project. At the last conference, 200 scholars came to Houston for the session.

Project staff assembled an anthology of Hispanic Literature and it was published by Oxford University Press. The anthology is used widely in undergraduate courses across the country.

The project continues to add scholarly partners and now has 5,000 scholar affiliates from the United States and abroad. All of them are sending information continually about the location of Hispanic resources.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Kanellos emphasized that it is impossible to assess the value of making really rare books available, but by identifying these “hidden collections,” his project has preserved a cultural legacy that could have easily disappeared.

In the process of working on the bibliography, the scholarly project formed a partnership with the University of Houston Libraries, where the digitization and preservation work are carried out. The project partners around the country have also learned a great deal about preservation and the digitization of resources.

## The Importance of the Grant

Kanellos estimates that the project to identify, preserve, and digitize 1,000 books could have been completed over a 10-15 year period had the project relied solely on its own funds. With the SAT grant, the work was accomplished in a much shorter period of time. The project principals had resources to identify the most effective technology for accomplishing the work, and because work was now being accomplished at scale, the staff could make the content corpus available to database producers who were able to distribute it to a wide range of institutions and scholars.

The University of Houston has leveraged this project to create a PhD program in Spanish around recovering Hispanic literary heritage. It is one of the few institutions that trains future professors in Hispanic literature and culture.

The accomplishments achieved with the grant have led the project staff to take the next step in creating the Digital Humanities Center for Hispanic Studies at the University of Houston. They plan to train scholars and students from many institutions using the digitized texts from the project. After their training, the scholars and students will return to their home institutions to continue digital humanities projects that combine the digitized materials from the Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage project with local resources to create new scholarship.

Many of the books that have been preserved in this project were deemed not important at one time by the libraries that collected them. Non-English books printed on poor-quality paper did not warrant staff time to catalog them in earlier days. Now, scholars and students understand that these non-canonical materials are absolutely essential for understanding non-mainstream populations.



# University of Illinois, Chicago Chicago Urban League

*September 2, 2017*

*Deanna Marcum | [Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org](mailto:Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org)*

## Organizational Context

The University of Illinois, Chicago began in the nineteenth century as a set of medical schools. In 1913, the three independent health colleges became fully incorporated as the Colleges of Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy. The passage of the G. I. bill after World War II prompted the university to create a temporary, two-year undergraduate division on the Navy Pier, making it possible for returning soldiers to complete their first two years of college in Chicago before going downstate to the main campus of the University of Illinois to complete their degrees.

The demand for public education in Chicago remained high, even when there were no longer pressures created by returning veterans, and the university began planning for a permanent, degree-granting campus in the city. In 1965, the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle opened with ambitions to become a great research university. The student body grew rapidly. In 1982, the Chicago Circle campus and the Medical Center campuses consolidated to form a comprehensive university campus with six health science colleges and an academic medical center with “Research 1” status, based on Carnegie classifications.

## SAT Grant and its Implications

University of Illinois at Chicago

Richard Daly Library

Chicago, IL

SAT Award: \$100,000, matched by indirect costs of staff time

National Endowment for the Humanities

Grant period: 2006-2008

Contact: Peggy Glowacki, Manuscripts Librarian

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Telephone: 312.996.2742

The National Urban League was founded in 1910 and is one of the oldest social service and advocacy organizations serving African Americans. The Chicago Urban League was formed a short six years later, coinciding the height of migration of African Americans from the South to Chicago. During that period, Chicago was the second largest city in America, and the largest number of African Americans settled in Chicago. Although the Chicago Urban League began as a social services agency, it took on many different issues such as jobs, housing, and public accommodations to black citizens as time went on.

The records of the Chicago Urban League are important for chronicling the history of Chicago, but also provide a window into national history. The Chicago Urban League collected information about a wide variety of issues and organizations that were connected to the African American experience, and these records are also found in the collection.

The Chicago Urban League donated the records to the University of Illinois, Chicago in 1966. The 1,000 linear-foot-collection was more than the library could accommodate, and the collection was sent to off-site storage (at that time, a warehouse with modest climate control and no special security). Library staff understood the value of the collection, but the library did not have funds to bring it in house for processing and preservation. Since the collection was out of sight, the staff did not realize that the boxes, originally packed by the Urban League, were not arranged in any way and little care had been taken in the way materials had been placed in the boxes. The SAT grant requested funds to process, treat, and re-house the collection inside the library where it could be maintained in proper conditions.

## Work Accomplished

The photographs were in the poorest condition. They had been tossed into boxes and had been folded, creased, and damaged in the process. Emulsions had cracked. The photographs were mixed with other types of materials. Some of the materials were duplicates; some were of little importance; and some were highly significant historically. The first task was to process the collection so that the staff had a better idea of what was actually there.

The grant allowed the library to hire archivists and graduate students to weed and process the collection. The internal photo services lab handled the photographs. Once the collection inventory was completed, the work of preserving the collection could begin.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Although some of the photographs have now been digitized and made accessible through the library's web site, the grant awarded in 2006 was early in the history of digitization. The library's greatest aim was to process the collection, create a finding aid for it, and put it online so others would know what the collection contains. The finding aid has also been added to Archive Grid and to the Explore Chicago site, a consortium of Chicago cultural organizations that have a common web site to aid all of those interested in Chicago history.

The Chicago Urban League collection is among the top five most-used collections of the library. It is also heavily used by the Chicago Urban League as it has questions about its own history, and it is an especially valuable resource for the Black Metropolis Research Consortium, a collection of libraries and archives in the city that stress promoting and making readily accessible the history of the African Diaspora and Chicago.

## The Importance of the Grant

The Chicago Urban League collections had been housed in a warehouse for 50 years gathering mold and deteriorating. Even though the UIC staff continued to put the collection high on its priority list for processing and treatment, the resources were not sufficient to deal with such a large and unorganized collection. The SAT grant literally rescued this valuable resource for African American history.

Items from the collection were central to UIC's exhibit, "Fight Segregation," the story of the 1960s attempt to de-segregate Chicago's public schools. In 2018, the collection will also be featured in an exhibit on protests in Chicago. The materials illuminate the African American experience in Chicago, but also in America, more broadly.



# University of Minnesota, Twin Cities: Immigrant Images Collection

*July 27, 2017*

*Deanna Marcum/ Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org*

## Organizational Context

The University of Minnesota, Twin Cities is the flagship institution of Minnesota's public university system. Founded in 1851, the university has the sixth largest main campus population in the United State with more than 50,000 students. It is a major research university, ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in the country in terms of research activity.

The University of Minnesota Libraries holds more than 8 million volumes and has a robust web presence that attracts more than 2.4 million web visits per year. The Libraries are well known for advanced uses of technology.

## SAT grant and its impact

Immigrant Images Collection

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Minneapolis, MN

SAT award: \$250,000; matched with \$250,043 from in-kind contributions from the library budget and contributions from private sources

National Park Service

Grant period: 2002-2006

Contact: Joel Wurl, former project director, now at the National Endowment for the Humanities

e-mail: - [jwurl@neh.gov](mailto:jwurl@neh.gov)

Telephone: (202) 606-8570

The SAT grant to the University of Minnesota came through an earmark. The Congressman representing the university's district contacted the university to gauge interest in the program because he wanted to see some of the grant funds go to institutions in his region. The university immediately thought about the immigration images in its collection as an ideal candidate for such a project. At the time, the images

were housed in the Immigration History and Research Center in the College of Liberal Arts. The collection has since been moved to the University Libraries.

The collections' strengths are first and second generation immigrants and displaced persons who came to the USA from central, eastern, and southern Europe; the eastern Mediterranean (formerly called the "Near East" region of the Middle East and North Africa); and late-20th and early 21st century immigrants and refugees. The collections include books, newspapers, periodicals, photographs, and digital resources. They include personal papers as well as organizational records of ethnic and immigrant-formed groups, and of social service providers.

The university chose the immigrant images collection for the project because of the high public value of the photographs. These images also had a high educational value for the K-12 community. The libraries had just begun to experiment with digital technology and most other institutions that were exploring digital projects were working with images, so this collection seemed ideally suited for the SAT program.

Joel Wurl, then head of research collections and associate director of the University of Minnesota's Immigration History Research Center, and now senior program officer at the National Endowment for the Humanities, developed the proposal that was submitted to Save America's Treasures. He focused on outreach, dissemination, and educational exposure for the center's primary source materials.

## Work Accomplished

The SAT grant allowed the center to digitize 2,000 images from the collection. All of the digitized images were added to the libraries' just-developing web site, Minnesota Reflections. All of the photographs were digitized in house by the libraries' staff.

The photographs were in relatively good shape, and the grant was not used for conservation treatment. Instead, the center chose to digitize the images so that physical handling of the originals would be rarely necessary, thus extending their life, and so that many more people would have access to the images on the web.

Digital technology was quite new at the time and the libraries' staff had very little experience with digitization, but the grant presented a transformational opportunity to re-think the work and to open the way for digital curation.

The center used the grant as an opportunity to develop workshops for history teachers so that these images could be incorporated into K-12 curricula. The center also worked with

the Minnesota Humanities Commission to introduce teachers across the state to a wider array of source materials.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

At the time the grant was awarded, digitization was in its infancy. The University of Minnesota made an important decision—to digitize collections as a preservation strategy. In 2002, it was difficult to ensure that digitization was a form of preservation, but the Center concluded that digital technology could create surrogates that would forestall handling of the original photographs and could be used for broad access to the collections for new categories of users.

The project ushered in an entirely new direction for the university and its library. In order to undertake the digitization of the photographs, the center partnered with the University Libraries to establish digitization procedures. The partnership developed for purposes of the grant project led to a new organizational structure that in turn led to the University Libraries becoming a national leader in digitization. The center continues to focus on public and academic programming on the topic of immigration.

## The Importance of the Grant

The grant proved to be a great opportunity for the university, even though it was not solicited. The act of digitizing an important collection led to a new approach to thinking about collections not simply as resources for scholars, but as information resources that should be shared as widely as possible with the public. The realization that digitization could so dramatically improve access helped the libraries emphasize digitization in its strategic plan. Since the images of immigrants were digitized, the libraries contributed copies of them to Europeana, the first international, large-scale digital library. When the university chose to mount a major exhibition on the topic of immigration, the digital files were centrally featured. Based on the overall progress of digitization by the libraries, the Digital Public Library of America invited Minnesota to become a digitization hub, a place where smaller libraries and cultural organizations can bring their collections to be digitized and added to a national collection.

Joel Wurl, who established the Immigrant Images program, reported that the opportunity to participate in the Save America’s Treasures program raised the profile of both the center and the libraries within the university. The focus on digital technology made these organizations seem more progressive. This profile helped to accelerate digitization efforts, generally.

For the Twin Cities community, the grant proved to be important in contributing to better understanding of newer immigrant communities in Minnesota. The state is a major destination for several refugee communities, specifically Hmong and Somali refugees. The historical images in the collection have been especially useful for reaching children of these newer immigrant communities, helping them understand that many others have experienced what they are going through.

While the immigrant images could have been digitized by the university without grant funding, it would have taken much longer, and the impact would not have been as notable. The center, the libraries, and the university itself were aligned in a project that received considerable publicity. Digitization advanced much more quickly, and it changed the strategic direction of the libraries.

Wurl argues that we are in a time where history and truth are under significant question. This happens in part because people do not understand the past. Reading what historians write is not always sufficient. People understand more fully when they encounter primary sources of the past. Students become excited and curious when they see these documents. These projects, he says, fuel that curiosity that leads to understanding.



# University of Oklahoma, Sam Noble Museum

*August 24, 2017*

*Deanna Marcum/ Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org*

## Organizational Context

The Sam Noble Museum was established at the University of Oklahoma even before Oklahoma became a state. In 1899, the Territorial Legislature founded a natural history museum on the campus of the University of the Territory in Oklahoma in Norman. It was designated as the Oklahoma Museum of Natural History. In May 2000, the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History opened with new facilities for collections, labs, libraries, staff offices, and exhibit space. The mission of the museum is to inspire visitors to understand the world through collection-based research, interpretation, and education. In 2014, the Museum received the National Medal awarded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services for excellence.

## SAT Grant and its Impact

Sam Noble Museum

University of Oklahoma

Norman, Oklahoma

SAT grant: \$45,000, matched by the same amount from institutional funds and private gifts to the University

National Endowment for the Humanities

Grant period: 2003-2008

Contact: Daniel Swan, Curator of Ethnology

e-mail: dcswan@ou.edu

Telephone: 405/325-1600 (museum office)

The Native American Ledger Books are historically important because the calendar records chronicle a 100-year history of the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma, depicted from the indigenous perspective. The drawings of Kiowa artist and calendar-keeper Silver Horn cover the period between 1828 and winter of 1928-29. Each year is represented by two images—one from summer and one from winter. The images include astronomical events, births and deaths of significant people, wars, disease, and inter-tribal

animosities. The Kiowa Tribe gathered two or three times a year and tribal leaders made a group decision about the events that would be recorded for the year.

The grant from Save America's Treasures allowed the museum staff to take the volume apart, properly preserve each of the sheets, and prepare the drawings for being turned into a major publication from the University of Nebraska Press.

The calendar was donated to the museum in 2000 from the estate of Nellie Mae Roberts, who ran an Indian trading post in Anadarko. Only one other complete Silver Horn calendar is known to exist, and it was created by Silver Horn specifically for the Smithsonian Institution.

## Work Accomplished

The SAT grant proposal was developed by Jason Jackson, an ethnology post-doctoral fellow. He chose the preservation of the Silver Horn calendar because he knew that he would soon be leaving for another position, and he wanted to find a project that could continue after he departed. Unfortunately, the position was left open for three years and no progress was made on the project. When current curator Daniel Swan was hired, he discovered that the grant had already gone beyond its expiration date, but no funds had been spent. He negotiated an extension with the NEH and immediately hired a paper conservator to work with the university's conservator to treat the Silver Horn calendar. The preservation work took more than a year to complete. The leaves of the calendar were treated separately and mounted on Japanese paper. The paper was de-acidified and wrinkles in the pages were smoothed. The structural integrity of the paper was restored where there were problems, although the materials were in reasonably good condition.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

The Silver Horn is a cultural record of the Kiowa Tribe in Oklahoma. The leaders of the Tribe made a group decision about the images that represented the major events of the year. The importance of the calendar is that it is produced by the Tribe itself.

The SAT grant allowed the museum to create a teacher's guide to the calendar, and the digitized images are widely used in the K-12 curriculum in Oklahoma schools and elsewhere.

## The Importance of the Grant

The opening of the Sam Noble Museum featured a major exhibition of the Silver Horn calendar. Currently, the museum is seeking collaborating art museums that will mount exhibitions in their institutions of the calendar's leaves. The staff is in discussions with venues in the Southwest, East Coast, the Upper Midwest, and the Pacific Northwest.

The University of Oklahoma was on the cusp of digital publishing during the period of the SAT grant, but a decision was made to publish the materials as a book through the University of Nebraska Press, largely because they placed a high priority on making the bound volume available at an affordable price to the Native American community. The grant allowed for a subvention payment to the University Press that made it possible to publish a book that could be sold at \$19.99 per copy.

The digital images of each leaf of the calendar are freely available on the Museum's web site, and they are widely used.



# Louis I. Kahn Collection

*August 27, 2017*

*Deanna Marcum/ Deanna.Marcum@Ithaka.org*

## Organizational Context

Established in the fall of 1978, the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania gained its international reputation initially through the Louis I. Kahn Collection whose resources include all drawings, models, photographs, correspondence, and project files from Kahn's office. Purchased by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania from the Kahn estate in 1975, the Collection was placed on permanent loan to the University by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and opened to the public in September 1979. The Kahn Collection attracts large numbers of domestic and international visitors and has served as the basis for innumerable publications and exhibitions.

## SAT Grant and its Impact

Architectural Archives of the School of Design

University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, PA

SAT award: \$70,000, with \$70,000 matching funds from the University of Pennsylvania

National Endowment for the Arts

Grant period: 2004-2006

Contact: William Whitaker, Curator and Collections Manger

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Telephone: (215) 898-8323

Louis I. Kahn emigrated to the United States with his family from Estonia in 1906 and became a U. S. citizen in 1914. He was educated at the University of Pennsylvania, completing a degree in Architecture in 1924. He became one of the most important architects on the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and between 1960 and his untimely death in 1974, his work was highly influential. Kahn worked in the offices or collaborated with the most prominent architects of that period, including John Molitor and Paul Cret; founded the Architectural Research Group with colleague George Howe; and taught at Yale

University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before returning to his alma mater.

The University of Pennsylvania's Architectural Archives holds the largest collection of Kahn's architectural records. With the SAT grant, the Archives conserved all 6,363 of his architectural drawings. In addition, the grant allowed for the construction of a new storage facility that meets state-of-the-art climate standards, resulting in the storage of 41,000 collection items in a stable environment.

## Work Accomplished

Conservators at the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts treated and re-housed all of the items in the Louis I. Kahn Collection. They processed 41,000 collection items, including architectural drawings, models, photographs, and office records and correspondence. They included both built and unbuilt projects. Many of these materials were also digitized and made publicly accessible on the web site.

Conservators recognized that storage conditions would determine the longevity of this historically significant collection. Because of poor storage, heavy research use, and unstable nature of the paper, the collection of personal drawings, construction drawings, and sketchbooks had significantly deteriorated. The construction of a climatized storage facility, along with the treatment and re-housing of the collections, meant that these materials will be accessible to researchers and the public for many years in the future.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Louis I. Kahn was trained in the Beaux-Arts tradition, but after a trip to the American Academy in Rome in the 1950s, he began to develop a style that was all his own. Kahn became known for large, modern buildings made of unusual combinations of materials. From the start, he was interested in architecture's role in social change. He created housing for factory workers during World War II, and later in the 1940s worked on buildings for labor unions. After the war, Kahn also designed several private homes in the Pennsylvania suburbs, working in a modernist style. In both his completed buildings – such as the National Assembly Building in the capital of Bangladesh – and his unbuilt projects, there is a fusion of modernism with historic forms that sets him apart from his predecessors.

## The Importance of the Grant

Architectural drawings present a number of challenges to archives and libraries, especially the size and fragility of the drawings. The Kahn Collection at the Architectural Archives makes materials available to those who can't travel, but the physical experience of an archive remains invaluable to those who can visit in Philadelphia. The artifacts themselves have been preserved so that visitors can immerse themselves in the life's work of one of America's most influential architects.

The Kahn Collection comprises more than the 6,000 drawings in the architect's own hand. There are also development and working drawings by his office, models, photographs, slides, and extensive correspondence. In addition, researchers have access to oral histories: interviews with Kahn's employees, clients, and contractors. Bill Whitaker, curator and himself an architect, describes the collection as "the view from the drafting room."



# Virginia Historical Society

August 3, 2017

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## Organizational Context

The mission of the Virginia Historical Society is “to connect people to America’s past through the unparalleled story of Virginia.” The organization was founded in 1831 as the Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society in Richmond. It is one of the largest historical societies in the country. The society entered into a public/private partnership with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to create the Center for Virginia History, allowing the society to increase its display and archival resources. The Virginia Historical Society has continually published *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* on a quarterly basis since 1893.

## The SAT grant and its impact

Virginia Historical Society

P. O. Box 7311

Richmond, VA

SAT award: \$77,461, matched by internal funds and a grant from the National Society of Daughters of Colonial Wars

National Endowment for the Humanities

Grant period: April 2006-June 2009

Contact: E. Lee Shepard, Vice President for Collections

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telephone: 804-342-9670

The Virginia Historical Society applied for an SAT grant to restore four separate letterbook volumes (retained copies of letters written on behalf of Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie of Virginia from 1751 to 1758, the period including the start of the Seven Years’ or French and Indian War and the rise of George Washington to first prominence as a military leader), along with 18 loose documents, 17 of which are original letters of Washington to Dinwiddie, written between 175 and 1756.

These letterbooks had been privately owned by Henry Stevens, then sold to William Wilson Corcoran (founder of the Corcoran Gallery), and finally donated to the Virginia Historical Society in 1881. The historical significance is that both sides of the correspondence between Washington and Dinwiddie are contained in the letters and, in the aggregate, provide a rich collection of the Colonial Period.

When the letters came to the Virginia Historical Society, they were published in two volumes. Though not a scholarly edition, the volumes served as the sole method of access to the letters for the public. The physical condition of the letters was not good, and over time, pages had started to crumble and extensive restoration was required.

## Work Accomplished

The work accomplished with grant funds included:

- Complete restoration of four letterbook volumes of correspondence of Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie of Virginia and of 18 loose documents, all but one in the hand and with the signature of George Washington
- Digitization of all pages of the four restored letterbooks and 18 loose documents
- Creation of web pages relating to the project itself, featuring selected documents, introductory and explanatory text, and teachers' aids, and
- Development and completion of information forms covering each letter/document in the collection for use in preparing metadata records for future electronic access to images of the entire collection.

## Preservation of Cultural Heritage

The letterbooks had badly deteriorated, and an expert paper-based documents conservator was hired to do the highly-specialized work to stabilize the paper. The most challenging part of the project was to reunite the hundreds of fragments of paper that had crumbled. The conservators were able to connect most of the fragments with their original pages, and those that remained were treated and maintained so that they could be further analyzed and possibly restored in the future.

Conservators took an extra step with this project to create a series of web pages that explored the environmental and related threats to the documents that comprise the Washington/Dinwiddie papers, as well as the process of treatment required for restoration of the volumes and letters.

Lee Shepard, vice president for collections, noted that the Virginia Historical Society was created in 1831 because the founding documents were disappearing and needed to be preserved. Today, the society's mission continues to be all about preservation. The society takes seriously its role as a last bastion of preservation of materials related to American or Virginia history. The society knows that it must always remain an institution that can be counted on to care for and preserve materials for future generations.

## The Importance of the Grant

The historically significant collection had not been available to scholars or the public for many years. Because the papers were in such poor condition, they could not be taken out of their archival housing. The SAT grant allowed for the restoration and digitization of the collection, and as a result, these materials are now widely accessible to the public.

The Virginia Historical Society is funded almost exclusively by individual donors. Finding donors for preservation projects is extremely difficult, so without the SAT grant, the Washington/Dinwiddie collection would probably still be in boxes on the shelves, unavailable to the public.

The preservation of the collection allowed for digitization, and the process of preparing digital images of the collection has opened up many new opportunities for the society. The staff had to re-think all of its processes for managing archival collections, starting with the fundamental step of creating metadata records for each of the letters that appear in the letterbooks and each of the loose documents. With metadata for each object, the staff has been able to develop a digital asset management system that allows them to make available a much wider range of documents from the collection.

In addition to making more of the collection accessible on the web, the staff has also been able to include more items in its long-term exhibition, the Story of Virginia. Digital versions of the letters, rotating every six months, are included in the display. There is always something fresh and new in the exhibit. The digital images are also used in the educational programming that has become a key feature of the society's work.

The staff has created a behind-the-scenes tour especially aimed at school children that gives them an opportunity to see the preservation process up close. They gain a better appreciation for how their history is preserved.

## ABOUT US

## AMERICAN ARCHITECTURAL FOUNDATION

# Center for Design & Cultural Heritage

Since its founding in 1943, the **American Architectural Foundation** (AAF) has served as a national steward of architectural history and the architecture profession. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., AAF empowers leaders to transform communities through design and organizes its efforts into three international design Centers - the Center for Design & the City, the Center for the Advancement of Architecture, and the Center for Design & Cultural Heritage. By combining knowledge leadership with on-the-ground engagement, AAF serves as a platform for design leadership, literacy, action, and impact.

AAF's **Center for Design & Cultural Heritage** promotes the role of significant cultural and historic resources in creating more vibrant, sustainable, and economically robust communities. Through its programs (Save America's Treasures, the Thought Leadership Forum Series, the Richard Morris Hunt Prize, and the Oculus Award for Leadership in Design & Cultural Heritage), the Center works to preserve, protect, and restore the United States' most iconic structures, landscapes, artifacts, and traditions.

The American Architectural Foundation, as the nonprofit partner of **Save America's Treasures** (SAT) since 2014, is on a mission to tell the stories behind the Save America's Treasures grants. Working with the National Park Service and its Save America's Treasures partner agencies, we're working to increase public understanding and visibility of this critical program and the role it plays in preserving our most significant cultural, intellectual, and heritage resources.

The **Thought Leadership Forum Series** was developed in 2014 to discuss contemporary trends, opportunities, and challenges in preservation and to explore the linkages between design and cultural heritage. The Forum Series brings together preservationists, architects, policymakers, and other stakeholders to act upon issues of preservation stewardship and advocacy in the 21st century. The inaugural

Forum was held in December 2014 and explored the role between craftsmanship, design, and preservation. The second Forum was held in July 2015 to examine the role and importance of storytelling in preservation. The third Forum, held in July 2016, explored issues surrounding the policy and politics of preservation in the 21st century.

Created in 1990 by AAF and the French Heritage Society, the **Richard Morris Hunt Prize** is an intensive six-month program which awards an annual prize of \$20,000 to registered architects in France and the United States whose research explores contemporary challenges in historic preservation and urban design. The program was created to offer guidance and access to a network of leading historic preservation professionals in the two host countries.

The annual **Oculus Award Luncheon** was initiated in 2014 to honor leadership in cultural heritage and highlight organizations whose preservation initiatives promote vibrant, sustainable communities. The inaugural Oculus Award recipients were the International Masonry Institute and the International Union of Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers, who received the award for their steadfast dedication to providing comprehensive training on historic craftsmanship and preservation.

# American Architectural Foundation

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