

NSHRAB meetings
Chadron, Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center
18 October 2005

Attending: Ten attendees in addition to Bunny and Kay

Microfilm readers needed (Dawes County Historical Society) but funds are tight. Cooperative buying suggested (equip). University surplus auction might be source.

Mailing list and email list needed to keep in touch with other people who are responsible for records.

University archives needed at Chadron State; special collections needs to be created. Archival materials are all over campus. University and college records are at risk.

County records storage room too small, microfilming a problem—years of records never filmed, little space, poor storage containers.

Are grants available for building, equipment? No, but for access, there are funds, planning and microfilming, some possibility. Records schedule would help i.d.

Fading dot matrix printing

Wants ideas about arrangement and description.

NSHS field rep program ended, and is missed.

Starting a Museum Studies program at Chadron State, addressing in part goal 1.

Need a decent building for storage at Dawes County Museum for records. Collaborative storage for county offices/county museum, etc. Fire and climate controlled facility.

Job corps volunteers can help with projects.

Hard copy produced from digital records at the county level.

International standards need to be followed for microfilming in order to digitize off film

p. 3 of plan cited. Storage conditions in Cheyenne County Courthouse. Surveyors field notes 1870s+ Sheridan County notes are in poor storage. Possible that the state surveyors office and find out if one set is in Lincoln or in Washington DC. Boundary surveys in old books (possibly). Bunny will check with the state surveyors' office.

Digital imaging lab at Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center might be a big resource. Currently, they are doing glass plate negatives. Rare Book Collector developed system to digitize the Gutenberg bible; Other institutions that have this system are the Folger, and

NARA. Hiring someone to run the lab. 2 offsite copies. Mari Sandoz letters, keyword indexing, digitization project.

Access to collection through websites is desirable (especially finding aids and online indexes for genealogists.) OPAC that could be shared would be useful. NSHS is attempting to create an online catalog of archival resources in the area or state.

Digitization to protect original photos from use raised. Currently, there is a wall of photos at the Dawes Co. Historical Museum.

CONTENTdm. Nebraska Memories project mentioned. Discussed the idea of leveraging a grant from NHPRC with state LSTA monies. Training for digitization is available through NLC/UNL. Possibly have NSHRAB be a co-sponsor?

More on Chadron state museum studies program: Applied history (undergrad museum studies program.) Interns are unpaid. Museum admin, exhibit design, phil and history course, etc. Sarah teaches and sets up internships at the Career Services office.

10 years ago, no discussion relating to digitization at the strategic planning meetings, because the internet was almost an unknown. Now technology is of concern.

Describing records. Guides on arrangement and description desired? In developing finding aids, it is not unusual for different institutions to apply different terms. Society of American Archivists publications, AASLH literature. Cooperative library of professional literature would be useful in the area.

Q&A:

How do you order microfilm? Available by ILL. Current price for silver reel is about \$60. Use the University's catalog to search.

Repository for vital statistics in the state? Births/deaths 1904; divorces/marriages 1909. Earlier ones at NSHS. Genealogical project some years ago. Nuckolls chose not to participate. See NSHS website for details.

Maintaining list cross referenced by position/individual. People in place change; contact list needed with both position and individual.

Goals from 10 years ago still pretty apt though progress has been made.

How are archival items saved by NSHS? Disaster plan has been developed. Microfilm masters stored at another building. Salvage priorities have been identified.

NSHRAB meeting in North Platte, 19 Oct 2005:

Attending: 7

Storage facilities not the best/planning for preservation needed. Funding for microfilming needed.

Indexing cemeteries of Chase County/microfilmed records there. School records are not very security. Superintendent of school offices closed and records should have been sent to the state. Microfilmed funeral home records for Juanita. Shows names of parents, children, and spouses. Trying to add info to county historical society website.

Genealogy society working at digitization of genie records, but the hard drive failed. Clippings may or may not have dates and may not have copyright info. Digitization of Canteen records discussed. Library/Museum collaboration possibility? Would SHRAB be a source of funding? Microfilm for preservation/digitization from film.

Lincoln County museum established an archive in a few years. These were dispersed throughout the collection. Canteen records were an exception. Condition fair to excellent. Now in one building, climate controlled to a degree. Old school house is not insulated. Other priorities unfortunately. Space an issue at both the museum and the libraries. Missouri archival and record department great—regional facilities with full-time archivists. State legislators need to understand preservation and history issues. Putting logs online. County records of land records online there. 1866-67 expenditures of sheriff's departments, etc. Lincoln County Museum is a private institution. Decent facilities needed for housing county records or regional archives or state archives.

McPherson and Keith county genealogy info in North Platte Public Library. Lincoln County Museum not interested in genealogy. One complete set of city directories between museum/library. Duplication not desirable due to space issues.

Interest in salvaging records and providing access to genealogical records. Would like info released after 50 years instead of 70 years.

Technology a greater issue now than 10 years ago. Make sure you check standards for digital projects. Have a migration plan.

NSHS online catalog is very slow. WPA collection access info.

Death records at state; marriages; cemetery records.

Hershey newspapers, older county newspapers, many old issues donated since the Nebraska Newspaper Project collected papers for filming.

Training/professional dev. Training on how to find county records. (for county records custodians, and for the public.). Constant training. Every county does it different. Make records keeping consistent within the state. Secretary of state should designate standards.

Illinois and Missouri given as examples. States like Kansas, Neb, Wisc. Have a historical society model instead.

NACO? December 2006 is the next annual meeting.

League of Municipalities? Are statutes kept?

Expired articles of incorporation are kept at NSHS.

NSHRAB meeting in Kearney

Attending: 6

Ravenna Historical Center has mostly photographs, now cataloging them. Ravenna Genealogical and Historical Society. No tax dollars. Births, Marriages, and Deaths have been indexed; files kept. Former librarian on board. Technology is dated,

Buffalo County Historical Society, collects original records.

County treasurer early tax records, 1980 records on computer and won't hold up. Needs a plan for preserving them. On disk and magnetic tapes. Nothing discarded of tax records. Dot matrix printing fading. Storage not good.

County register of deeds. Buffalo county deeds. Paper and computer, sewer line in bottom of basement. Security microfilm at K St facility. Film checks no longer done due to loss of positions. 35 mm silver halide film. Original plats in basement. County board would need to take action.

Constant education needed. County officials packets—can these be put online? Training for county historical societies on archival management. Needs a public records officer. Common storage facility—clearinghouse for information.

Organization needed. Information needed on collections and cemetery records. Online guide at NSHS needs descriptions of collections. Can link to websites.

Public is not sure what records are kept at the county officials vs. county historical museums.

Legible documents needed. No legal requirements about font size, etc. Some guidelines exist but nothing so micro in scope. Has NACO discussed? Not a type priority.

Archive Writer. Brian Pillard, Lancaster County at K Street. Discussed digital projects and how to do well; discussed ability to digitize from 35 mm microfilm.

Discussed digitizing photographs. CONTENTdm image management is available for the Nebraska Memories Project, managed by the Nebraska Library Commission.

Privacy protection of records. Real estate records are currently open. But discussing closing? Concern expressed by the county treasurer. This was not discussed by NACO. Social security numbers on many forms that have been microfilmed. Not now on drivers licenses.

Hospital records, adoption records are currently closed. Would like to see adoption records opened after a reasonable amount of time. (Medical records covered under HIPA). Could NSHRAB work with citizens on getting adoption records opened after 50 years instead of 70? NSHS will not accept anything that is permanently closed.

Physical storage an issue, affordability of storage. Old records falling apart. Grantee/grantor indexes film not always legible, do a county by county? Approach genealogical society to sponsor a project?

Access to each county courthouse is different, and it would be useful to know the hours, especially for researchers. Appointment, or provide in 24 hours. Etc. Due to staffing problems access can be limited, or there may be access but no security for records. In addition, microfilm equipment may not work at one location. There does not appear to be good ways to share equipment with other institutions in particular localities—or to loan microfilm to a location that can handle the public.

Records and services of a couple counties combined in one facility in Kansas. Cooperation may be required in the future if budgets continue to be cut. Adams County holds naturalization records on behalf of state, but the records belong to the state archives at NSHS.

A discussion of this nature would be an excellent program for NACO. June 2006.

**NSHRAB meeting in Norfolk
8 November 2005**

Attending: 11

Three major issues: access, preservation, training. Asked for information on needs of institutions.

Space and storage concerns were fairly universal. On the positive side, the group knew what environmental standards were needed.

Preservation issues of concern included care of materials in courthouses. Thurston County Assessor's office brought digital images of substandard storage conditions. Preservation microfilm standards and digital standards were discussed.

Grants from NHPRC and NEH (CAP) grants were discussed as well as Nebraska Memories from the Nebraska Library Commission.

Individual issues: Trying to build an archives at Wayne State, which would involve the Val Peterson materials and college archives. At present, very few of the administrators or departments are interested in an archives, and many of the materials are being held by a secretary in the president's office (?).

Ponca Tribe of Nebraska has cultural materials relating to Ponca tribes in other states. Concerned about access issues, has training needs, and they need a microfilm reader.

In Schuyler, there are old school records. Need more fire safes—though we discussed that these are not as important as a disaster plan and salvage priorities. They also have deeds and homestead certificates. They don't know where to buy mylar (supplies).

School census 1907+ in Thurston County assessor's office, not in alpha order, plastic?? since county superintendent office closed. Clerk doesn't have room, so the records are in the assessor's office instead. They also have unique Omaha tribe records, such as allotment books.

Platte County recorder indicated that they are interested in updated records retention schedules. She noted that there are space problems; tax lists, etc. They have transferred old records from the 1800s to the Platte County Historical Society. Bunny noted that if the records are considered "permanent records," it is incumbent upon the counties to notify the Neb State Historical Society.

Antelope County historical society in Neligh. Concerns include—photos with staples, scotch tape, poor climate controls, space issues. Wrestling with issue of why should we keep some of these old materials? Who will use them? Old newspapers falling apart. The quality of film for the newspapers has been poor in the past. Inadequate equipment to read and print also noted. Kay described standards for filming set in about the mid-1980s, and current ISO/NISO/ANSI standards.

Stanton Historical Society is located in the old City Hall. They have a lot of historical stuff, original newspapers, etc. Unfortunately, the original newspapers are used more than they would like, because the film that was produced years ago is largely illegible. They also need a records keeping system, to be able to know what they have and to make it accessible. Recently, they have purchased a Past Perfect software package. As there is only one curator, hard to keep up with everything. Bunny recommended the archival guides produced by the Society of American Archivists, such as the Archives Fundamentals series.

Gail Exon from Stanton. Need list of experts to contact. Phone numbers or addresses and form letter templates would be useful. Pioneer cemetery association members mentioned that they had traced records of pioneer county cemeteries. Several years ago, they gave the records to a board member to put on computer, but the info has not been digitized, and they cannot get the records back. They fear that the individual will destroy the records. They may need to seek legal advice. In addition, they have the records of a one room school house.

The tribe wants to begin creating oral histories, and needs advice on how best to do this, and how to care for the histories once they are produced. They currently have a few tapes, video tapes. Ponca tribe of Oklahoma. Bunny suggested a primer online at the nebraskahistory.org site. Mentioned Mary Kay Quinlan at the UNL. NSHS is creating transcripts and finding aids by subject.

Website directory would be useful. Kay noted that websites can be cataloged on OCLC, and thus be available in WorldCat.

Send a list of websites to participants. <http://nebraskahistory.org>, <http://cdrh.unl.edu>, etc.

**NSHRAB meeting in Ainsworth
9 Nov 2005**

Attending: 1

Public library in Ainsworth is the only one in the county. Their county funding (\$10,000) was cut entirely this year, and now the library charges \$35 per person for cards (for non-Ainsworth residents) or \$100 per family. Though the librarian spoke with many people and members of the school board, only two people went to the county commissioners' meeting to complain about the cuts, and now people around the county are upset. The librarian was asked to write grants to offset the cuts, but she has always done so and has been successful in the past; also told to do fundraisers. The library is heavily used, as we witnessed. Conditions are somewhat crowded; there is a local history section.

Broken Bow: training and education for volunteers important; learning collections and passing on expertise are issues.

NSHRAB meeting in Grand Island, 10 Nov 2005

Attending: 10

Grand Island Public Library's space will double in about two years as they build a new parking lot and an addition to the library.

Adams County Historical Society—many records. Lack of funding, space, personnel. One long range goal is digitization. Primarily want to digitize indexes (marriage records, for example), which will improve access, free up the time of the director, and potentially result in revenue gains. At least an hour per day of head's staff time spent on records questions. Has applied for money for a sampling of photos (representative images). Est. 16,000 images in all.

Hastings Museum director. Here to listen. Has a small collection of two-dimensional items on Kool Aid. Wants to access to images from other institutions in the state and county for creating exhibits. Digitization of others' collections would be helpful.

Hall County Historical Society. Board member. Focus on buildings and records from 1930 to the present. No written collection development policy.

Clerk of the District Court. Microfilmed. Old film has vinegar smell. Original is in Lincoln, and new copies can be purchased.

Adams County Register of Deeds. Microfilming for the other offices. Old books used to be in room with ultraviolet lighting. Faded originals due to light damage.

Stuhr curator of research. Understands need to digitize for the public. Public expectations sometimes conflict with preservation needs. Like other institutions, Stuhr has limited space and limited budgets. Grants may not always be best—especially if they require 1:1 match.

Sutton Historical Society. They have more buildings than records, but have similar concerns.

Clerk of Court—budget problems, space problems, digital imaging (microfilm with measles). She has digitized or is digitizing everything created during her tenure. Would like to get key cases online. Archive Writer at Lancaster County and preservation microfilming issues were discussed.

Central City Public Library. Newspapers done; LSTA monies for digitizing. Microfilm Imaging Systems from Omaha is buying back old machines and retrofitting them with digitization equipment. These machines are then rented out. Will digitize microfilm. Modifying. One page per minute, TIFF, less than \$600 per month rental. Nebraska Memories project discussed.

County officials, museums, libraries, county historical societies. Developing the plan—what needs do you have? Electronic records an issue. Training for historical societies, organizing records, knowing what you have? Training on preservation microfilming—standards, how the process works. Workshops on intro to digital projects.

Grants—matching funds for federal grants; stores-- dollar general, walmart, runza, Could sponsor workshops on grants; Nebraska Museum Assn. (NMA) newsletter. NSHRAB can sponsor workshops, photo preservation; etc. Co-sponsorships with NMA.

It was agreed that ongoing training is needed, and that the other goals are still good overall.

NSHRAB meeting in Omaha, NE 28 February 2006

Attendees: 7

Bellevue Univ Library has the archives of some departments on campus; however, there is no place for comprehensive archives. In addition, they have turn of the century yearbooks, and general Nebraska-related materials. Since the archives/records management situation is just beginning, this offers opportunities for the library and archives to plan for systematic collection and collection management issues. They would

be interested in a controlled environmental facility. Oral history materials in the collections include interviews that students did with WWII veterans vets.

Consortial arrangement for storage, security, exhibit, research in the Douglas County area were discussed.

LaVista is a new city just coming into its 50th year, and is not yet tuned into historical aspects of its existence. The public library is keeping newspaper clippings. The city has been good about keeping records, but there is not enough space and there are no special environmental controls. The public library sees the importance of doing oral histories—common sense says not to go there. In spite of that, they are doing some. Bunny recommended the manual on the NSHS. Angelo advised them to contact Dennis M.

Ralston PL. Interested in genealogy and history. Though they have a new facility (6 yrs), they are already out of space. They have transferred their local historical materials to an archives/museum in Ralston. One of their space issues results from framed and matted photographs. Many older reference materials and old books need a new home. They have bound volumes of the Ralston newspaper, which is one of the last to do a local column. NSHS is microfilming the newspapers and they are hoping to rebind. Kay recommended that they use archival newspaper boxes instead.

Cass County Historical Society. They are getting more and more genealogists, and also many contacts by mail and email. Like the other institutions, CCHS also has storage issues. They are adding to their photographer files. CCHS hopes to have a building with climate control storage sometime in the future.

Omaha Public Library. OPL has a large genealogy collection. It may be the largest one between here and Denver. They also have a large photo, postcard, stereoscope card collection. Charles Dietz was one of their early board members, and he gave them many stereo views and lantern slide materials. Among digital projects that they have been involved in are the Transmississippi Exposition; Western Trails project; Nebraska Memories Project. OPL also has lots of maps and atlases. Their main concerns are providing access to rare, historical materials, and storage (space and environment).

Discussion: Behind the scenes aspects of collection management are not visible to the public or to legislature or to board of directors or trustees. Staff cuts mean more emphasis on reference—hard to keep up with the behind the scenes efforts.

UNO. Looking at digitizing student newspapers. 100th anniversary of the University coming up, and this may be a fundraising opportunity. Space is being added for service and study areas. ADA issues are involved. UNMC has a new special collections area.

Three proposals from Angelo Louisa.

1. Establish a program to identify, catalog, and possibly digitize finding aids of all academic archives in Nebraska. Bunny reported that NSHS has conducted training on how to report finding aids for inclusion in the NSHS online database. Twenty to thirty percent of the finding aids for NSHS collection level records are online. Some responses from around the state, but less than hoped for. There are links to some of the larger collections on the NSHS site. Could there be a workshop developed for academic archivists? Kay mentioned that the Society of American Archivists has some good resources in their archives fundamentals series. Group grant? Add to the strategic plan. Continuous education is necessary.
2. Hire a field representative to work with organizations that need help, and borrow materials for microfilming. (Urban League is an example of an organization not into preservation business that had important archives.) Bunny explained that NSHS used to have field reps, but lost the positions. The reps worked with county historical societies. Angelo suggested that SHRAB apply for grant to pay for field rep. Bunny noted that NHPRC would expect Nebraska to pick up the costs in about two years. Angelo suggested that develop a list of Nebraska historians who are writing about the state. Ask them about collections they are using and use them as contacts for the field rep. Prioritize field rep positions in fundraising.
3. American sports history. Would like to identify, catalog, and digitize sports records. Wahoo Sam Crawford's papers. Baseball Hall of Fame in St. Paul, Nebr. Central website to hold. Ask Ben Rader if he's interested in being involved. University should be leader in this. Kay will discuss this with Mary Ellen Ducey and Pete Brink. Would like to know what's out there. Write to Bob Gibson. College World Series. Nebraska baseball teams. What happened to the records?

Money appears to be an issue. Seek a grant to fund grantwriter as a fundraiser. Local people very impassioned about local history. Pockets of local money for local historical societies. Sports fans would be interested in donating. Approach from local level. Grassroots efforts most likely to be successful. Look at local businesses. Nebraska Community Foundation. People will give \$100 in-kind. Genealogists will pay to have computer work done. Bunny noted that NSHS lost its grantwriter in budget cuts. She described the David City project relating to the Boston Studio Collection. Got money and time from the volunteers. In Douglas County, how are we going to raise monies? Constant issue.

Certain affinity groups would be interested in a topic and might be interested in knowing where records groups are. Could create consortia to seek grant funds. Adopt a charity idea was suggested.

Bunny announced the Sunday March 19th Conservation Road Show to be held in Lincoln. Part of Nebraska Public Television.

Kay asked if the main goals in the last strategic plan are still appropriate. The group agreed that they are still important and needed; however, electronic records might merit a separate goal.

NHSRAB meeting in Lincoln

Attending:

Heritage Room: Literary collections by and about Nebraska authors. Some archival collections are held. Staffing is part-time. They have created an in-house inventory of audiovisual materials. Looking for a grant for preservation. Currently they are copying clippings onto acid free paper.

NSHS curator of government records: described a project at a previous position to produce Maryland land records online. There are about 135,000 digital records online.

Pres of Lincoln Lancaster County Genealogical Society: The Society has old probate records, and marriage records which are deteriorated. They are trying to update an online index. The records have actually been filmed by NSHS and belong to NSHS. People prefer to use the originals. Bunny urged LLCGS to send users to NSHS to use the film.

State capitol archives have architectural records and original objects. An NHPRC grant to digitize the archive's collections survey is needed. For example, correspondence groups are split. The biggest users group is on site—architects and construction people looking for specific info on building. There are some outside researchers, who are typically seeking information on artisans, techniques, and structural analysis.

Saunders County Historical Society has a wide range of materials. Some are indexed, some are not. There are foreign language materials in the collections, and they have problems finding people to translate. Researchers are mostly genealogists, though they do get some graduate students studying materials that they have on the Nebraska Ordinance Plant, for example.

Nebraska Library Commission. They have some old state agency publications. Beth described the Nebraska Memories projects. NLC is providing an online home for cultural heritage materials and is offering LSTA funding to libraries and other cultural institutions to create digital images. Materials must be Nebraska related and must belong to an institution--not personal papers. CONTENTdm used to store JPEGs and metadata. Beth noted a collaboration between a public library and the Antelope County Historical Society. She also described various government newsletters that are only being produced digitally. NLC requires print copies, and is providing an edocs alert about online documents. They use the same criteria about what to archive on the NLC website as they did for print—amounting to about 400-500 items per year. They know that there are other publications out there, so this is only good for the publications they know about.

There is no automated harvesting. A human being seeks online publications and downloads them.

Nebraska Humanities Council. Raymond suggested that there might be a role for advocacy to help boards of trustees understand what needs to be preserved. He used examples from the Saunders County Historical Society relating to bound newspapers.

Public citizen. Medical records of old doctors? Wants old records about date of her birth as certificate may not be correct. HIPA and privacy laws were discussed. One or two collections of doctors' papers were mentioned, but generally, hospitals run their own archives. Bunny mentioned that burial records from the regional center sealed. Kay suggested that since the birth was her own, she may indeed be able to access the records without violating HIPA.

Denton Community Historical Society. The two women from the Society attended meetings relating to the last strategic plan, ten years ago. The meetings were very helpful to them and others from Denton who have since started a historical society. Twenty-five people came to presentation by John Schlicher. They have 151 memberships. Unlike many communities, they have young members and often hold fundraisers. Some grants have been received from the Norris Public Power District, and they had keno funds for a while. A preservation workshop by NSHS was very helpful. All photos are in acid free housings, as are others. Problems: they have only a room for collections, and space is tight. There are no environmental controls. They would really like to have a museum building, but there is no land to be had. Denton is the only incorporated town in the area. Kay suggested that they need to look into planned giving or an endowment to help raise funds for a museum building. In the meantime, she suggested that they investigate creating a "virtual" collection through Nebraska Memories. This would show off some of their collections, and perhaps help them in raising funds for a building. Bunny suggested that they contact the Nebraska Museums Association for advice on building. They described a house in town that they have their eyes on. Photos of barns, grant with NHC.

Bill Ptacek, the Deputy Secretary of State, described himself as a SHRAB member for life. He noted that electronically produced records are a very real concern. He is hoping that PDF/A (PDF Archival) will be a static format if it is approved. He noted that currently, PDFs (an Adobe proprietary software) are not backward compatible.

Re: NLC, Beth indicated that they are making TIFFs of PDF newsletters and then are microfilming the TIFFs.

Bill said that Nebraska Records Management Division is not aware of everything that is being produced by agencies. Some agencies don't alert NRMD because they know they'll be required to provide other formats. One agency has a huge collection scanned, and is keeping the paper version in their basement.

York County Historical Assn: Annual meetings would be useful, field reps would be great. A workshop on Conservatorship 101 would be useful. She mentioned a simple one at the Ford Center in which she learned how to make phase boxes. Uses that skill every week. Bunny asked if they are indexing as they go. Nancy said that it is hard to keep up, and that indexing would be very useful for cross collection searching. Where can small groups go when they have basic questions, like what can you do on a limited budget? Bunny described the usefulness of collection-level records. It is hard to keep up with inventories and where the collections are located. No subject access to collections.

If genealogical society is given things, should NSHS be given the opportunity to review?
Yes.

Are the strategic plans goals still important? Yes.

Preservation workshop would be useful on an ongoing basis. Finding aids? Look at collection form and NSHS website. Union list of archival collections.

Conservation Road Show coming to State Fairgrounds March 19th, 10-4 p.m.

Next ten year plan coming out this summer.