Digitization Advisory Committee Meeting
December 14, 2022 at 11 am via Zoom

Present:
Claire Lovell (SCRLC), Christine Brown (SCRLC), Julia Corrice, Chair (Cornell University), John Hosford (Alfred University), Erin Rushton (Binghamton University), Maggie Young (Steele Memorial Library)

Excused: Erika Jenns (Southern Tier Library System)

- Digital Services Program Update
    - We had four enormous scanning projects this year. All scanning is done, which leaves just processing for me to do.
    - The Seneca Falls Library project is finished, seen here: Seneca Falls Library | New York Heritage (nyheritage.org).
    - Elmira College Bulletins and Class Catalogs are half processed, seen here: Elmira College Catalogues and Bulletins | New York Heritage (nyheritage.org)
    - Weedsport Yearbooks are next, probably to be finished by late February.
    - Houghton University yearbooks to be done after that, finished by June.
    - The Consider the Source project will cover membership dues for new members for two years, so we've expanded our membership tremendously:
        - Steuben County Historical Society
        - Allegany County Historical Society
        - Chenango County Historical Society
        - Dryden Town Historical Society
        - Schuyler County Historical Society
        - Cayuga Museum of History and Art
        - Cayuga County Historian's Office
        - Spencer Historical Society
        - Hornell Public Library
        - Canal Society of NYS
        - The last four are not yet approved members but very likely to become so.

- Introduction of SCRLC's newest librarian, Christine Brown
    - Christine is our new Hospital Library Services Program librarian. She's visited about half of the hospital libraries so far, and looks forward to building back that program.
    - She is also responsible for SCRLC's Resource Sharing program, and has meetings scheduled to plan events and services.
    - She is also responsible for making sure that SCRLC keeps diversity, equity, inclusion and justice at the forefront of everything we do, which includes the Digital Services Program and Claire's work.
    - Christine, Claire and Mary-Carol are planning continuing education events for the spring while Jessica Philippe is still on leave.

- Inclusive Metadata speaker
  - One of those CE events we're trying to plan is someone to speak about inclusive metadata.
  - Claire had emailed Jarrett Drake, an archivist and anthropologist with a background in inclusive, proactive collecting and thoughtful descriptions, but he politely declined for being busy with his PhD.
  - Mary-Carol has asked her daughter Kayleigh, a librarian at Yale, for names of people there currently working on the topic.
  - Claire will next reach out to Kelly Bolding, Project Archivist for Americana Manuscript Collections at Princeton University and co-author of the Anti-Racist Description Resources from the Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia.
  - Julia notes that Cornell is contacting Dorothy Berry, who we assume will be an expensive speaker. Julia will report back.
  - Julia suggests looking at the Umbra team for names.
  - Erin suggests the Eluna Primo Working Group for Ex Libris users. The working group is having an informal discussion on DEI-focused changes for Ex Libris on Friday.
  - John suggests finding the Dartmouth students who participated in the documentary *Change the Subject* and following up on them, seeing how their perspectives might have changed in the last two years since the film: https://www.library.dartmouth.edu/digital/digital-collections/change-the-subject/about-the-film

- Open metadata statement
  - The group revisited the idea of formalizing a statement on behalf of SCRLC about open metadata. This was inspired by the OCLC/Clarivate lawsuit, but the DAC did not want to endorse such a company-specific statement a few months ago. Instead, the group agreed upon:
  "As SCRLC and its members strive to produce factual metadata, we believe this is made stronger by a library's ability to effectively use, re-use, adapt, aggregate, and share the bibliographic, descriptive, and any other metadata created during the information life cycle."
  - This will be posted on the DAC website.

- SCRLC Digitization and Technology Grant Application Review
  - Last spring, one of external reviewers, Ryan Perry from CLRC, had a series of recommendations about our grant review process. He runs similar grants for the CLRC region and has spent several years reviewing ours.
  - He noted that the "rubric scores often didn't reflect the most impactful projects" and "many categories are table stakes." The rubric ended up judging how good the grantwriters are and not the quality of the projects.
  - He suggested adding an explicit question about copyright status, and he wanted to see a more detailed level of description for the quantity and contents of the material to be digitized.

- ○ He also suggested a few things for Claire to do differently when packaging supplemental materials so that everything is in one place. He would like to have seen the content of the optional project plans built into the main application.
- ○ Julia agrees the rubric is not super helpful; it's more like a checklist.
- ○ She suggests we have a first submission date for feedback and a final submission date for applications.
- ○ Claire described a few of the challenges from the last year, and the issues of weighing apples against oranges.
- ○ For example, one applicant had received an award two years ago for a project largely based on volunteer expertise to select the material from across multiple collections. That person left the state and didn't do the volunteer work, so the organization had to scramble to pay a consultant, which left no money for digitization. They applied the next year for digitization funding, and the grant review committee and ACITS committee debated on the merits of potentially "throwing good money after bad." How could the application process address things like this? Julia suggested adding a question to the application: "If you experienced problems in your previous grant, how would you address those problems today?"
- ○ Julia noted that priorities could be a part of the review process. There would be one set of review process guidelines in addition to the rubric. For example, prioritize new or not-recent applicants, but that doesn't necessarily need to be in the rubric.
- ○ Maggie, who recently applied and won an SCRLC grant, didn't find the application too laborious or difficult.
- ○ John likes the idea of prioritizing brand new members.
- ○ Julia suggested having a good completed sample application available.

- ● Around the table
  - ○ Maggie at Chemung County Library District is working on digitizing newspapers with the new microfilm reader. There was a learning curve with the OCR but now she's on a roll.
  - ○ Julia at Cornell is working on a grant review committee for internal digitization projects. There's a shortlist of 5 great projects and they'll be able to fund 3 or perhaps 4. She's helping with metadata while another librarian is on a Fulbright scholarship. She's helping convert an Access database into ArchivesSpace. She's also working on authorities work for Folio, adding identifiers into authorities field and looking for an automated way to process this.
  - ○ John at Alfred has hired a new digital projects coordinator, Megan Allen. Since September she's been working with dspace and JSTOR cataloging projects. NYHeritage is the next on her list of projects, so there are a few text collections on their way. John mentions he's grateful for Renamer, a program that Julia had introduced him to.
  - ○ Erin at Binghamton University has begun uploading BU yearbooks from pre-1972. They've had a long series of committee meetings to think through any

hiccups in the yearbook digitization process, and feel comfortable with the project now. There's a soft launch this week and they'll do promotion in January. They've refined their take down policy and have a process in place to address any concerns. In the new year, they'll discuss doing any more recent yearbooks. BU has also hired a University Archivist, who's been working with Erin on born digital archiving. There has been a lot of collaboration between the two departments, especially about digital preservation.
- ○ Julia notes that Code4Lib will be at Princeton in March, and is a great conference.

Next Meeting:
March 8, 2023