



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

DIVISION OF PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative and selected portions of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the Preservation and Access application guidelines at <http://www.neh.gov/grants/preservation/preservation-assistance-grants-smaller-institutions> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Preservation and Access Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative and selected portions, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Chester County Historical Society Digital Preservation Plan

Institution: Chester County Historical Society

Project Director: Ellen Endslow

Grant Program: Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions

What activity would the grant support?

The Chester County Historical Society requests funds to work with Tom Clareson, a consultant and trainer for Lyrasis (see attachment), to develop its first digital preservation plan. The consultant will: 1) send a pre-visit survey to CCHS staff to determine the level of readiness, 2) make a 2-day site visit to interview staff, assess digital preservation needs and provide a staff in-service about digital preservation, and 3) complete a report that includes CCHS' digital risk assessment, a readiness chart, and an outline of a digital preservation plan with examples. CCHS staff will use this report to complete a 5-year digital preservation plan. It will be incorporated into the Collections Department's Preservation Plan 2010 – 2018 and overall strategic planning for CCHS.

What are the content and size of the humanities collections that are the focus of the project?

The **museum collection numbers approximately 80,000 objects** that span 3 centuries of local human life. 52,000 are on the PastPerfect database, about 25,000 with digital images. All are available to the public in the library reading room. They include grant-funded projects, high frequency research queries and portions of larger collections: samplers 260, furniture 632, quilts 365, silver 1,093, trade signs 147, flags 246, paper toys and dolls 8,079, paintings 898, furniture 897, clothing and accessories 4,376, agricultural equipment 2,300, military equipment 375, and more. Over 700 high resolution transparencies of objects for publication are scanned for digital reuse in publications. CCHS maintains the quilt documentation database of community-owned quilts from Chester County and the region. It includes over 1,000 object records, at least 1,500 digital photographs, 19 digitally recorded oral histories, and 250 high resolution publication photos, all available to the public on-site. A similar sampler documentation day was held for which we have 70 records being converted to digital format and 250 high resolution digital photos available to the public and through the future Sampler Archive Project. The museum also creates about 250 digital images for patron requests annually.

The **photo archives collection of over 80,000 photographs** spans the history of photography from daguerreotypes to born-digital images documenting the events, environment and people of Chester County. About 80% are cataloged at the collection level as MARC records in OCLC. Additional records (1,833) are available on PastPerfect. Twenty-four DACS guides (some grant-funded) give access to special collections such as William South's experimental color photographs 1890 – 1912; professional photographer Joseph Thompson's collection of 20th century politicians and entertainers in Chester County and Arctic explorer Samuel Entrikin's photographs. Digital assets include: 2,493 images documenting the Quaker community at the turn of the century in the Gilbert Cope collection and 450 images from the African American community accessible in the library on a FileMaker database (version 6); 200 images digitized by the Daguerreian Society in an NEA funded Research Database are available on the internet at <http://daguerreian.org/fm3/searchnea.php>; 429 images were scanned for 6 CCHS publications, *Just Over the Line: Chester County and the Underground Railroad*, *Traveling the Eastern Line: Student Essays on Southeastern Pennsylvania's Underground Railroad*, *Chester County Biography Volume I –III* and *Then and Now, Chester County*; 2 significant highly fragile collections were scanned to eliminate public handling – 232 photographs of J. Max Mueller collection of West Chester and environs 1885-1895 and 135 photographs from Albert Biles album documenting West Chester in its centennial year 1899; over 500 Civil War photographs have been scanned at preservation standards in preparation for a forthcoming exhibition. About 2,500 images from different parts of the collection have been digitized over the years at patron request for publication and are organized into an image library for access. To date 4,836 born-digital images have been added to the collection since 2004 documenting the building of the Justice Center in West Chester and other community events. There are 2 Access databases for records of copy negatives and newspaper clipping file photographs.

The **library holds a reference collection of approximately 20,000 books and original manuscripts that number 500,000**. Almost 95% of the reference books are cataloged in OCLC and are accessible to patrons at CCHS via PastPerfect. In the reading room there are FileMakerPro databases: World War II

veterans 12,973; World War I veterans 928; Revolutionary War soldiers 9,001; School Materials early 1800s to mid-1900s 3,949; and Churches and Cemeteries 1,127. The Accessible Archives provided to CCHS the DOS versions of the local newspaper *Village Record* 1809 – 1870 and Delaware County Newspapers 1819 – 1870. All of these databases are available in the library reading room. About 20% of the manuscripts are searchable through 100 finding aids as Word documents, some funded by grants. Examples include the Buffington-Marshall Papers 1706-1806, the Thomas Darlington Coll. 1684-1891, and several Civil War collections for regiments, soldiers and the GAR. As part of the preparation for the Civil War exhibit, 552 photographs and graphics from the library have been scanned and will be available for reuse.

Donor records for the permanent collections are being scanned for the first time. The electronic copy will be stored off-site as part of our Emergency Preparedness procedures. Approximately half of the documents (3,174) have been scanned to date. Many contain single spaced lists of multiple donations by individuals and are often referred to by descendants for research purposes.

How are these humanities collections used?

CCHS is located in a suburban area west of Philadelphia. In this strong cultural environment, CCHS has established a clear identity as the only institution offering a comprehensive history of Chester County, and surrounding southeastern Pennsylvania, from the seventeenth century to the present. Our audiences include local residents with deep county roots, a school and family audience, researchers and scholars, genealogists, collectors at large, senior groups, neighbors in surrounding West Chester, distant travelers and many newcomers to this rapidly developing area.

Collections staff at CCHS respond to over 450 collection-related questions monthly from on-site visitors and by mail, telephone and e-mail. They assist graduate, undergraduate and high school students from a variety of universities, museum studies programs and local high schools. The permanent collections are also used by scholars, local historians, genealogists, attorneys, property researchers, reporters, and local officials. Curatorial research supports collections documentation and provides material for interpretive exhibits, magazine and journal articles, and lectures. Local history organizations and classes from regional secondary institutions regularly visit CCHS for an introduction to collections care and museum work. The collections department works with an average of at least 6 graduate and undergraduate students annually who are pursuing careers in material culture, museum studies or archives management. In July of 2011, CCHS was a field trip stop by the Iraqi Conservation Institute. The delegation from Iraq, coordinated by Winterthur Museum and the State Department, learned about the methods we use to create access to and care of our collections. A State Department staff member later wrote that “CCHS came up again and again as an example of best practice during our board meetings conducted at the end of that week. Our Iraqi colleagues were both impressed and inspired by what your organization has accomplished with limited resources and determination.”

A limited selection reflects the variety of publications in which CCHS collections appear: *Layers: Unfolding The Stories of Chester County Quilts* (CCHS, 2009); *A Small Company of Faithful Ones: The Brandywine Guards of Chester County, Company A. 1st Pennsylvania Reserves*, Kevin M. Brown and Amy L. King, CreateSpace (2011); *The Hidden History of Chester County: Lost Tales from the Delaware & Brandywine Valleys*, Mark E. Dixon, The History Press (2011); Koterski, James R. *Potters and Firebrick Makers of Cecil County, Maryland, and Nearby 1750 – 1950* (2011); Cooper, Wendy and Lisa Minardi. *Paint, Pattern and People: Furniture of Southeastern Pennsylvania 1725 – 1850*. Winterthur (2011); Ogden, Kate Nearpass. “Portraits by George Washington Conarroe,” *American Art Review*, Vol. XXII No. 6 2010, pp 76 – 79. 2010; Biddle, Daniel R. and Murray Dubin. *Tasting Freedom: Octavius Cato and the Battle for Equality in Civil War America*. Temple University Press, 2010; Brody, Susannah. *Remembering Chester County*. The History Press, 2010. Lukens, Rob, “Samuel J. Entrikin and the Peary Greenland Expedition of 1893-1895: Gender, Race, and Society at the New American Frontier,”

Pennsylvania History (Autumn 2008); *“The Good Education of Youth”: Worlds of Learning in the Age of Franklin*, ed. by John Pollack, University of Pennsylvania (2009); *Timeless: Masterpiece American Brass Dial Clocks*, Frank L. Hohmann III (2009); *In the Shadow of the Civil War: Passmore Williamson and the Rescue of Jane Johnson*, Nat & Yanna Koyt Brandt, University of South Carolina Press (2007); *Acre of Quakers*, compiled by John Charles Nagy and Penny T. Goulding, Willistown Twp. Historical Commission (2006); *Lincoln’s Wrath: Fierce Mobs, Brilliant Scoundrels and a President’s Mission to Destroy the Press* by Jeffrey Mamber and Neil Dahlstrom (2005); *Between the Brandywines: A History of West Bradford Township* by Catherine Quillman (2005); *American Experience: Poverty in America* by Catherine Reef (2007); *The Hayes Family [genealogy]... Centennial Edition* by the Hayes Family Association (2006); *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption*, edited by Emma Lapsansky and Anne A. Verplanck, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003.

What is the nature and mission of your institution?

CCHS is an historical society, founded in 1893, whose Board-approved mission states that it is a not-for-profit educational institution that promotes an understanding of the history of Chester County and southeastern Pennsylvania by collecting, preserving, exhibiting and interpreting that history and its relationship to the region, and nation beyond, to audiences of all ages and interests. The Vision statement furthers that goal. The History Center of the CCHS is a vibrant place where people may encounter, explore and learn about the past. With diverse audiences and Chester County’s unique heritage at its core, CCHS is an educational leader in the history community of the Delaware Valley.

CCHS collections are available to anyone who is seeking information. Through exhibitions and on-site research, the collections are available to the public Wednesday through Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. year round and by appointment. CCHS is open 205 days, including weekly hours minus major holidays. This does not include occasions when the building is also open for rentals and programs outside of regular hours. CCHS’ operating budget in F/Y 2011 was \$1.36 million. It supports the collections, a full-time paid staff of 8 and a part-time paid staff of 10. Volunteers throughout the organization total 278.

Has your institution ever had a preservation or conservation assessment consultation?

This request is part of the ongoing support by CCHS leadership for conservation and has been identified as a top priority. The museum completed a General Conservation Survey (GCS) in 1990 by Virginia Naudé. In 2004 all permanent collections (library, museum and photo archives) were included in one Preservation Plan (2004-2007) developed through the Conservation Center for Art and Historical Artifacts (CCAHA) in Philadelphia. The current Preservation Plan 2011-2018 was completed as part of CCAHA’s Stewardship Track II program. Each has been used as a guide for conservation decisions.

Surveys in the 1980s included: a portion of furniture in 1987, paintings in 1988, quilts by Nancy Papay in 1986, a selection of clothing by the Textile Conservation Workshop in 1989, and Quaker clothing by Helene Von Rosenstiel in 1990. In 1990 Papay conducted a General Textile Conservation Survey of flat textiles and that same year IMS awarded funds to the museum for the GCS. The GCS noted the need for staff to catalog sub-collections to be followed by item-level conservation surveys. As a result we obtained a Detailed Condition Survey of works of art on paper by Betty Fiske in 1993/94, funded by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. With IMLS funding: in 2001 Kory Berrett conducted a conservation survey of trade signs and commercial stencils; in 2002 there was a conservation survey of the flag and banner collection by Fonda Thomsen and Nancy Pollak; in 2005 Susan Duhl did a survey of the paper toy and doll collection; and in 2008 a full paintings survey was completed by Mark Bockrath. IMS funded a 1985 conservation survey of the photo archives collection within the library; Debbie Hess Norris provided a preservation plan for the creation of a photo archives. In 2002 the library had its first general conservation survey, conducted by CCAHA. The photo archives received a PHMC grant in 2009 to obtain a preservation plan for over 530 oral history and musical recordings.

CCHS has also been awarded NEH Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions. In 2006 the grant was used to develop an Emergency Preparedness Plan under the guidance of Barbara Roberts. In 2008 Colleen Callahan and Newbie Richardson assessed the clothing and clothing accessory collection. A third grant was used in 2009 for Kory Berrett to survey the 3-dimensional toy collection and in 2010 we received a grant to purchase shelving for a new storage area.

What is the importance of this project to your institution?

This project is an essential priority. Most digital assets are created for access. CCHS would like to develop a systemic procedure for digital preservation, particularly because most collections management efforts include converting information to an electronic format. Also, CCHS has experienced the typical increase of research requests with increased presence of collections information on the internet. Additionally, portions of collections have been scanned for use in publications or for public display and born-digital images are now being offered for donation.

The value of a digital preservation plan was dramatically reinforced in the Fall of 2011. CCHS underwent another change in IT contractors. In a separate incident, the CCHS website was disabled by a virus for more than 2 months. Although these issues encompass the entire institution, the library and photo archives pages were significantly affected. There was a measurable reduction in research inquiries during the website crash and finding aids are yet to be reinstalled. A digital preservation plan will play a key role in our ability to develop a comprehensive preservation strategy, to plan effectively for hardware and software needs, and to make informed decisions about our ability to create access to permanent collections. It will also help us to educate new technology contractors to our needs and will help CCHS to deal more quickly with contingencies that affect our technology infrastructure.

What are the names and qualifications of the consult and staff involved in the project?

Thomas R. Claeson joined PALINET (which became LYRASIS in 2009) in October 2005. Claeson led PALINET's digital collections creation and management services, preservation services, and consulting activities, and was responsible for establishing new services and funding sources, grant writing, and outreach to the museum and historical society communities. Claeson currently consults nationally and internationally on preservation, digitization, special collections/archives, remote storage, funding, and advocacy issues. He has served as a lead consultant on 17 IMLS "Connecting to Collections" preservation planning grants, where he has run web surveys and focus groups to determine statewide preservation needs. He is also co-leader of the annual "Digital Futures" 5-day workshop series, sponsored by King's College London in the U.K. and Australia. With nearly 20 years experience in preservation and digitization services, Tom was previously with OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc. and Amigos Library Services, Inc. Tom holds an MLS from Kent State University, an MA from Ohio State University, and a BA from Ohio Wesleyan University. He has been active in the Society of American Archivists to the Joint Committee on Archives, Libraries, and Museums and serves on the Board of Trustees of Heritage Preservation.

This project is integral to staff responsibilities. **Ellen Endslo**, **Director of Collections/Curator** – MA in Historical Admin., Eastern Illinois U. Project Manager; has been at CCHS since 1999. She will distribute the survey, coordinate the consultant's visit, and oversee the final plan with staff. Endslo oversees the museum, library, photo archives and is primarily responsible for the museum. She has more than 21 years of curatorial and collections management experience, including projects funded by IMLS Conservation Project Support Grants and IMLS Museums for America grants, and NEH Preservation Grants for Small Museums. Member of AAM (CurCom Chairperson), AASLH, MAAM, PA Federation of Historical Organizations, Museum Council. **Heather Hansen**, **Collections Manager** – MA in American Material Culture, University of Delaware (Winterthur Fellow). She has more than 4 years of conservation and curatorial experience and started at CCHS in March 2012. She is responsible for the

care of and creating access to museum collections and the registration of loans. Hansen will work directly with the consultant on museum digital collections and the database, and participate in the survey and the final plan. She has been awarded Society of Winterthur Fellows and Winterthur Program Professional Development Grants and the David J. Toman Art Conservation Award and is a Board Member of Greenbank Mill and Philips Farm, Wilmington, DE. **Diane Rofini, Librarian** – MA in Biology, West Chester U.; MS in Library and Information Science, Drexel University. She has been at CCHS since 1997 and is responsible for the daily operation of the research library and has more than 20 years of archives and library experience. She will work directly with the consultant about the library digital collections, and participate in the survey and final plan. She has obtained PHMC grants to process manuscript collections. Rofini was formerly a Manuscripts Cataloger, Haverford College's Quaker Collection, where she processed and created guides to manuscript collections of Quaker individuals, families and organizations; and designed an online finding aids web page for the Haverford College Library website. Member of MARAC, DVAG, Society of American Archivists. **Pamela Powell, Photo Archivist** – MLS in Library Science, Villanova University. She has been at CCHS since 1985, is responsible for CCHS' photo collection and has 24 years of experience in cataloging photographic materials, fulfilling rights and reproductions requests, and reference services. She will work directly with the consultant about the photo archives digital collections, and participate in the survey and final plan. Powell has successfully applied for IMLS Conservation Project Support grants and PHMC grants. Member of MARAC, DVAG, and the Daguerrian Society.

What is the plan of work for the project?

January – February 2013 The consultant will provide a survey to CCHS' collections department staff to determine the level of digital preservation readiness. The Curator, Collections Manager, Librarian and Photo Archivist will complete the information for their respective areas. The Director of Collections will return it to the consultant.

March – April The consultant will make a 2-day site visit on a Monday and Tuesday when CCHS is closed to the public. The Dir. of Collections will schedule the visit. Day 1 will include interviews with collections department staff (library, museum, photo archives) and an assessment of digital assets and infrastructure. Day 2 will include a staff in-service training about digital preservation for all staff.

April – May The consultant will complete a report that outlines the risk assessment developed from the survey and site visit, that includes a readiness chart, and outlines a digital preservation plan with examples relevant to CCHS.

June – August Collections department staff will use the report to develop a 5-year digital preservation plan. This will be presented to the Collections Committee, a Board standing committee. It will be included in all strategic planning moving forward.