



S21. Explaining the Work of Digital Collections to Your Colleagues

Chair: Pamela A. McClanahan

Speakers: Alex Trim, Ethan Lewis, Leslie Eames, Lydia Neuroth, Maria Day, Mary Mannix

MARAC Spring 2025 Conference - “Crossroads and Bridges in Archival Practice”

May 3, 2025 | Harrisburg, PA

Agenda

- I. Overview
- II. Audience Poll
- III. Introductions
- IV. Panel Responses
- V. Q+A



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Overview



(Image provided by gettyimages)

Audience Poll



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Introductions

- Alex Trim & Ethan Lewis - University of Maryland, College Park
- Leslie Eames - Maryland Center for History and Culture
- Mary Mannix - Frederick County Public Libraries
- Lydia Neuroth - Library of Virginia
- Maria Day - Maryland State Archives



University of Maryland Libraries

Alex Trim & Ethan Lewis

Digitization Service Coordinators

University of Maryland Digital Collections Unit

Alexandra Trim, Internal Digitization Services Coordinator
Ethan Lewis, External Digitization Services Coordinator

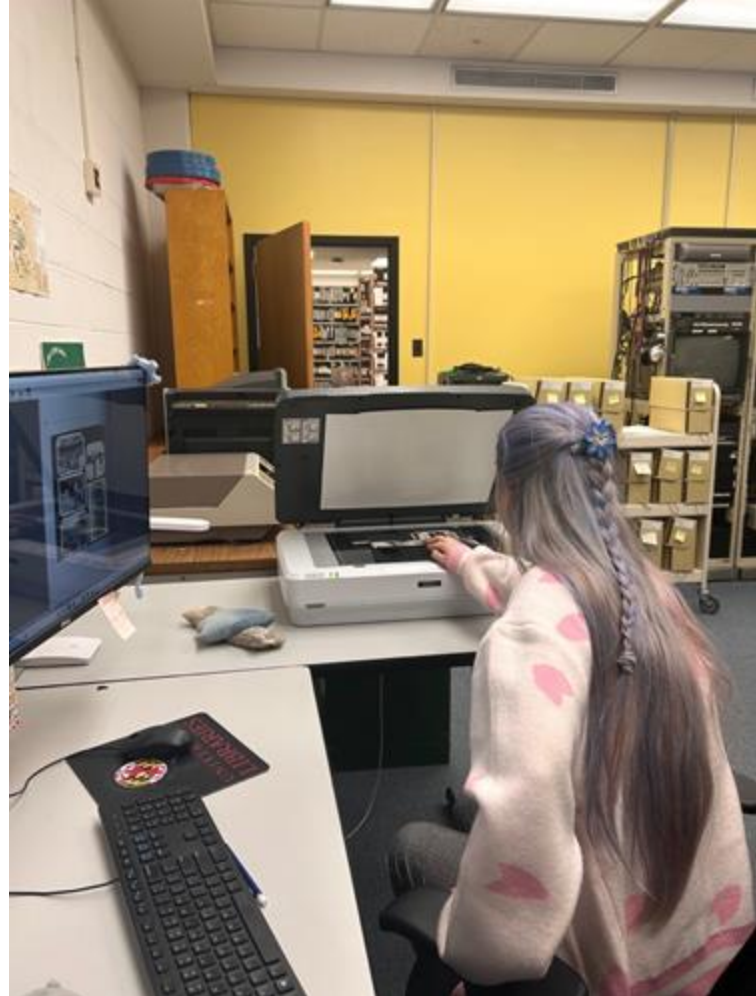


UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES

What are Digital Collections?

We are a Cultural Heritage Digitization Center that partners with the Libraries on campus to digitize archival and special collections materials for the purpose of preserving the digital files and making them accessible in an online repository with descriptive metadata.









Vendor Digitization Use Cases

- Large-scale digitization projects
- Specialized formats and preservation treatments (primarily AV formats)
- Grant work

Specialized AV Formats



AV Capture Best Practice

- Tech specs. developed by the archival community.
 - Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative (FADGI)
 - Best capture possible is **today**.
 - Trusted vendor best practices. (If a vendor cannot explain their practices = 🚩🚩)
- Inspecting material for preservation needs.
- Tech obsolescence.




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Maryland Center for History and Culture

Leslie Eames

Director of Digital Collections and Initiatives



- ////// The Maryland Center for History and Culture — formerly the Maryland Historical Society — is the oldest continuously operating nonprofit cultural institution in the state of Maryland. Since 1844, MCHC has been collecting, preserving, and interpreting the history of Maryland.**
- ////// MCHC houses a collection of 7 million books, documents, manuscripts, and photographs, and 350,000 objects in its museum and library, located in Baltimore.**
- ////// Only a small percentage of material is represented by digital collections:**
 - 3,159 resources, out of 15,437 digitized objects, are publicly discoverable.**
 - Less than .002% of the collection is digitized.**

▲ ONBOARDING, EDUCATION, AND BUY-IN

- End-users quickly adopt the system, discover relevant resources to their searches, and re-use content (images, audio, and video);
- A short onboarding tutorial allows for immediate user access;
- Leadership, donors, and stakeholders see the value in digitation to serve research, outreach, and accessibility goals;
- Challenges arise in educating leadership, donors, and stakeholders on the process of transformation digital files require to be accessible;
- All are receptive to learning opportunities on the subject, but the complexity of Digital Collections is challenging to communicate to a general audience, some of whom are not technologically adept.



CHALLENGES

- **Staff that support metadata and approvals are fitting that work in around other duties;**
 - MCHC has an extensive collection and small staff of 34;
 - 4 are DAM contributors;
- **Digitization projects of the past did not include metadata enhancement as a part of the project funding;**
- **Strict guidelines and many required fields means resource enhancement is time consuming and cumbersome;**
- **Difficulty developing metrics to communicate the output of Digital Collections;**
 - One digital resource can contain one or many digital objects;
 - A resource is not necessarily equal to one collections item.

STRENGTHS

- **Broad adoption within the organization;**
- **Dynamic, cost effective, storage capacity;**
- **Highly stable file preservation plan**
- **Metadata schema yields high quality, discoverable resources;**
- **Embraces excerpts and partial digitization as high-value digital objects;**
- **Able to efficiently receive large file ingests with embedded metadata from collaborators and digitization partners.**



Digital Collections

3,159 items

KEYWORD SEARCH

Enter Keyword

SUBMIT

FILTER RESULTS

DATE +

SUBJECT +

MATERIAL TYPE +

COLLECTION +

EXHIBITIONS +

NAME +



Tolchester Beach Amusement Park archway
circa 1910



Steamship 'Express'
circa 1932



Tolchester Beach Amusement Park pier and archway
circa 1910



Steamship 'Louise' in the Inner Harbor
circa 1905



Steamship 'Express' on Chesapeake Bay
circa 1925



Tolchester Steamboat Company quarters
circa 1925



Tolchester, looking out towards the bay from hotel
circa 1883



George Stewart
circa 1825



Stewart family genealogical notes
circa 1815-1873



Collier and his family on Sugarloaf Mountain
1816-11-03



Rifle
1913



Harry Sythe Cummings, Jr.
circa 1925-1940



Blanche T. Corliss Cummings
circa 1880-1900



Portrait of Richard Curzon Poutney
undated



Portrait of Honorable John Stevens Sellman
undated

VIEW NOW!



mdhistory.org/digital-resource

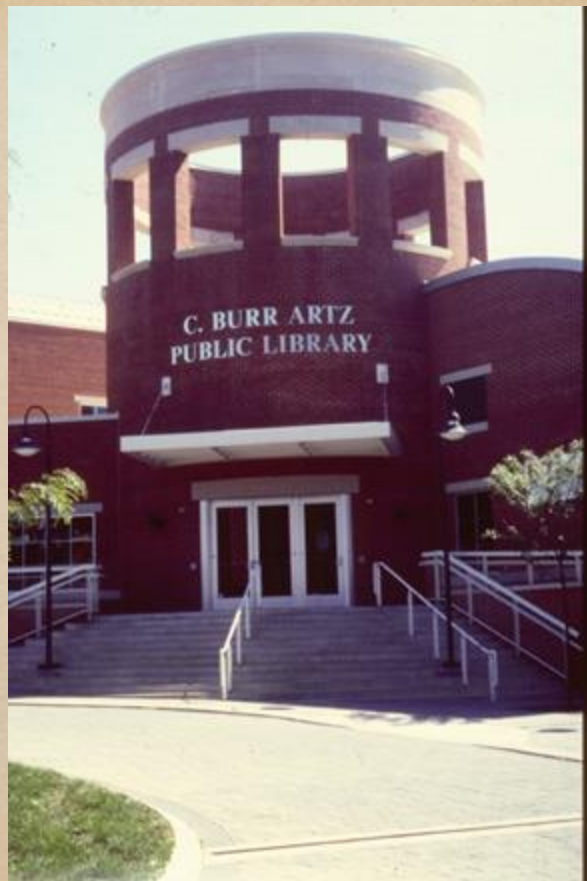


Frederick County Public Libraries

Mary Mannix

Maryland Room Manager, C. Burr Artz Public Library







<https://www.fcpl.org/content/maryland-room>

Maryland Room

The Maryland Room, located in the **C. Burr Artz Public Library**, is a noncirculating, local history research collection of primary and secondary sources. Materials actively collected document Maryland's economic, social, political, cultural, and religious history, the genealogy of Maryland's peoples, and the Civil War. Special emphasis is placed on obtaining resources relating to the peoples, places, communities, and institutions of Frederick County and City. Materials documenting the agricultural history of Frederick County and the surrounding area are also sought and would be maintained at the Thurmont Center for Agricultural History.

Baltimore, December 25th 1876

Friend

Alvin of New York had the honor probably to acknowledge the several
expressions of kindness, and the gratifying invitation with which I have
been honored by the citizens of Providence and many of our former pupils
to join them of New Bedford for their Christmas Commemoration

You have been pleased to refer my offering on Monday the 18th of Dec
Alvin has made an obligation to stay here Sunday night, and will then stand
to be returned to Washington City on the evening of the 31st as the train for
the purpose of New York on the previous 1st Dec and have had the honor to be invited
to dinner by the members of both Houses of Congress

Wishes of both be ready, on Monday, as early as a 11 o'clock express, to
depart for Providence City of Providence the High Satisfaction be witness to the
citizens in white rooms you have done for the cause to which we and to you,
Friend, a tribute of my grateful and respectful thanks
Sincerely
John M. Johnson

John M. Johnson 77 to 78





	A	B	C	D	E
88	ALLEN	William Henry		Farview	News 4/25/1886
89	ALLEN	William A.	43 y	St John's Catholic	News 7/24,26/1909
90	ALTON	Leta, wife of Rev. Robin Alton	104 y	St Paul's	News 7/20/1886
96	AMBUSH	Lula	19 y	St Joseph's, Manor	News 7/13/1896
97	AMBUSH	Arthur Frederick		Point of Rocks	News 5/24,25,26/1901
98	AMBUSH	Beverly B.	1 y	Greenmount	Rise 10/2/1918, News 10/3/1918
99	AMBUSH	Charles Ernst	76 y	St Paul's, Delta	News 2/26,27/1849
100	AMBUSH	John of A. P. Ambush	infant	Delta	News 1/8/1923
101	AMBUSH	John of Edward Ambush	infant	St. John's	News 5/1/1905
102	AMBUSH	John of Philip Ambush	infant	Mountain Church, or Greenfield Mine	News 8/25/1896
103	AMBUSH	John of Edward Ambush	inf	Mount Zion Church	News 8/7/1899
104	AMBUSH	Olga (Hallam), w. Lure E.	51 y	Farview	News 2/22,24/1844
105	AMBUSH	Douglas Harris, s of Chas & Ambush	3 mos	Point of Rocks	News 6/7/1914
106	AMBUSH	Edward	60 y	Point of Rocks	News 1/24/1909
107	AMBUSH	Edwin B., s of Charles Ambush	6 m	Hope Hill	News 8/5/1913
108	AMBUSH	Eugene Sherwood	23 y	Farview	News 9/8, 9/1/1916
109	AMBUSH	Edwin		St. Joseph, Manor	News 11/8/1912
110	AMBUSH	Rita, s of James Ambush	3 m	Hope Hill	News 11/22/1915
111	AMBUSH	Florence V.		Farview	News 11/20/1907, Raker
112	AMBUSH	Frederick	99 y	St Joseph on the Manor	News 3/29-31/1927
113	AMBUSH	Garry Lamson, s Chas/Michael	9 d	Point of Rocks	News 10/28, 27/1845
114	AMBUSH	Genevieve (Cagetti), w William T.		Farview	News 1/28, 2/1/1926, St John's p. 262 1/27/1926
115	AMBUSH	Harry, s of Arthur Ambush	6 y	Point of Rocks	News 8/25/1886
116	AMBUSH	Helen, s of Edward Ambush	14 y	Point of Rocks	Rise 5/8/1920, News 4/8/1920
117	AMBUSH	Magdalena Coats, wife of Patrick	84 y	Farview	News 8/21, 22/1915
118	AMBUSH	James Albert	21 y	Hope Hill	News 11/24,17/1913
119	AMBUSH	James Edward, s of James Ambush	9 y	Hope Hill	News 7/20 & 8/1/1913
120	AMBUSH	James Sabrosa	48 y	Farview	News 8/23,25/1845
121	AMBUSH	James William	61 y	Hope Hill	News 8/7/1918
122	AMBUSH	James, s of William Ambush	4 y	Hope Hill	News 1/29 & 2/1/1909
123	AMBUSH	Jean S., d Edward/Pat	13 d	Farview	News 8/4, 7/1901
124	AMBUSH	Johanna Virginia (Williams)	67 y	St Paul's, Delta	News 8/17/1917
125	AMBUSH	Joseph Bernard	63 y	St Joseph, Manor	News 8/12, 20/1841
126	AMBUSH	Joseph Wilson	18 y	Farview	News 1/27/1844
127	AMBUSH	Katia Hannah (Hallam), w James	18 y	Hope Hill	News 7/21, 22/1847
128	AMBUSH	Lawrence P.	37 y	Hope Hill	News 9/8/1915, p 1
129	AMBUSH	Mary Agnes E. (Barton), w Joseph	79 y	Farview	News 5/21,6/2/1854
130	AMBUSH	Mary E. or Helen May, s James E.	infant	Greenmount	News 11/4,6/1904
131	AMBUSH	Mary Genevieve (Smith), w Jesse		Farview	News 11/29,25/1918
132	AMBUSH	Mary Lillian (Jones), w John P.	13 y	Delta Methodist Church	News 8/15, 18/1948
133	AMBUSH	Michael, s of John P. Ambush	12 y	Greenfield Mine	News 8/25, 28/1913
134	AMBUSH	Myrtimer, d Sally Bovee	16 y	Barnesville	News 1/21/1891
135	AMBUSH	Ona, d of Martha Ambush	16 y	Point of Rocks	News 12/5/1910
136	AMBUSH	Patrick Henry	91 y	Farview	News 8/13, 17/1839
137	AMBUSH	Robert Elias, Jr, s Robert/John	14 y	Farview	News 8/5, 4/1841
138	AMBUSH	Rosa Maria, d Charles/Maria	2 m	St John's Catholic	News 7/18/1846, St John's p. 247 7/18/1846

Yellow Springs
Pleasant Hill
M.P. McKinstley
M.E. Johnson
M.P. McKinstley

No. 16 *mand data*
If found please return to J. M.
Wadsworth, 5314 Billericks Cir.
Baltimore, Md. Precious reward.
M.E. Church at N. Mkt.

Yellow Springs
Pleasant Hill
Mead, Detroit
M.E. Johnsonville
M.P. McKinstley
Stillpoint, Conn
Fresno - Calif
3rd 4th & River
Baltimore
Kimmel

Indexed

16

No. GG-820
GREGG RULED

No. _____ From _____ To _____

Made Under One or More of the Following U. S. Patents
2,121,148 - 2,147,269 - 2,289,544 - 2,649,129

GRIPPER EDGE

N Mkt

Yellow Springs 17 May 1955

Yellow Springs

- Geo E Twenty 28 oc 1874 - 0
- W Sadie E. 14 oc 1878 - 1 May 1948
- Christian Wisoner 22 oc 1853 - 25 Jan 1932
- W Annie C. 24 de 1857 - 6 m 1930
- Mary Rothenshafer, w of Wm A.
11 Jan 1872-16 ne 1923
- Charles W. Cannon 6 Jan 1921 45-6-7
- Chas W. Cannon, Md Post 5 Aug. 7th 40
28 au 1940
- W. Edson E. Cannon son of Margaret E.
d 12 oc 1945 no eye
- Louise Harley SEALE 29 au 1894-16/10/195
- Wade D. Harley son of Albert J. Harley M.
28 July 1917 19-9-17
- Francis M. Harley Co. L. Col. Cal. Cad 2146
20 July 1844-30 de 1917
- Wm Garrison E. 16 au 1844-12 mch 1918
- Louise Lannon Harley 18 de 1920-13 Jan 1942
- Thomas S. Harley son of Warren S. + M.C.
3 Jan 1920 0-10-26
- Wife son same d 8 July 1918 no eye

6224 State Dept. Yellow Springs, Pa.

MI

For our own entertainment ...





Library of Virginia

Lydia Neuroth

Project Manager - Virginia Untold

Lydia Neuroth

Project Manager for
Virginia Untold, Library of Virginia

Current role from May 2021-present
(Virginia Untold: 2013-present)

2021-2023:

Grant funded position to oversee and carry out the archival processing necessary for two large digitization projects

2023-present:

State funded project manager to oversee all aspects of project coordination



Virginia Untold at the Library of Virginia



+

- Digital archive project focused on records related to enslaved and free Black and Multiracial people in LVA's collections
- Digital image, item level metadata, and transcription in Rosetta repository, Primo interface, access to full data sheets
- Accessibility through crowdsourced transcription and indexing
- What do I do?

VIRGINIA
UNTOLD

THE AFRICAN
AMERICAN
NARRATIVE



Maryland State Archives

Maria Day

*Senior Director, Special Collections, Conservation, &
Library Services*



Maryland State Archives

Maria Day, Senior Director of Special Collections, Conservation, & Library Services

The Maryland State Archives serves as the central depository for government records of permanent value. Its holdings date from Maryland's founding in 1634, and include colonial and state executive, legislative, and judicial records; county probate, land, and court records; church records; business records; state publications and reports; and special collections of private papers, maps, photographs, and newspapers.



Maryland State Archives

About “Special Collections”



Special Collections mission is to preserve records broadly related to the history and culture of the state, as an adjunct to permanent government records.

Our department manages donations from private donors – individual and organizational.

The department was established as part of the State Archives at the time of the agency’s founding in 1935.

MSA Special Collection categories include: personal papers, community organizational records, religious records, newspapers, photographs, maps, digital objects, as well as items from state agencies that are not part of retention schedules, but have enduring, historical or culture value.

Maryland State Archives Special Collections & Digitization

Digitization of our own collections is often **project-specific:**

- Priority due to historic significance
- Public access needs
- Grant

Digitization projects may come in from **partnerships** with communities, local nonprofits, or other agencies who do not have the resources or equipment to digitize collections.

- Often the greatest challenges for our digitization projects occur when the physical format of the material is extremely fragile, necessitating specialized preservation care.
- Identifying and solving physical material problems *before* the project and not during is key to success.
- Not everything needs to be mended!



Preservation Facilitates Digitization



Laurel Historical Society's "Movie Pictorial" newspaper before mending.



Laurel Historical Society's "Movie Pictorial" newspaper treated and prepared for digitization.



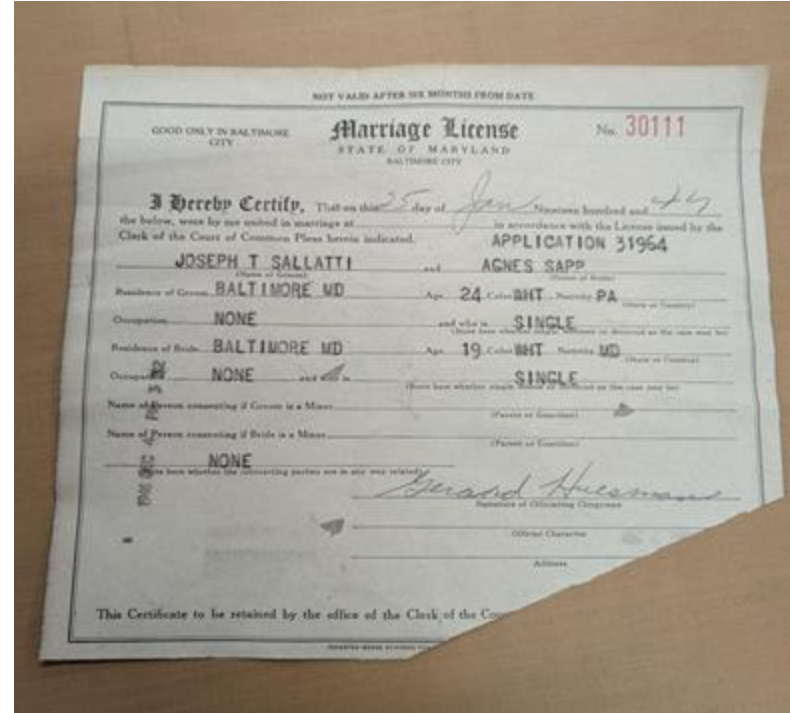
Preservation Facilitates Digitization



Marriage record - Before Treatment



Marriage Record - After Treatment



Panel Responses



(Image provided by gettyimages)



Questions for Panel

- What are some of the challenges you encounter in sharing your work with your colleagues at your library and archives or organization?
- How does the technical aspect of your field or specialized formats you handle factor into the understanding of your work among your colleagues? (ie. av, preservation, software/equipment, oversized/scrapbook, etc.)
- In sharing your work, how do you use education and outreach to foster new collaborations or partnerships? Are there other advocacy and communication strategies you use to explain your work?
- Are there project management tools and processes that help you share work?
- How is your specific niche area uniquely challenging among the different archival functions?
- Lastly, what are some of your favorite tips for sharing the story of your work with others?

Questions?



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