Californians Connecting to Collections

VISION

A self-sustaining culture of preservation management in California heritage institutions

PROJECT PRIORITIES

• Providing safe conditions for collections
• Marshalling public and private support for collections care
CalPreservation.org
Helping preserve libraries and archives
Implementation Activities Support Overall Goals

Providing safe conditions for collections
- Disaster preparedness workshops
- Disaster networking workshops
- 24/7 emergency hotline and resources

Marshalling public and private support
- Project Development workshops
- Stewardship campaign for trustees
Providing safe conditions for collections:
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- 24/7 emergency hotline and resources

Marshalling public and private support:
- Project Development workshops
- Stewardship campaign for trustees
Step #1
The Toolkit
Step #1

The Toolkit

With assistance from the Museum Trustee Association and the California Association of Library Trustees and Commissioners
Californians Connecting to Collections

Dear Director,

Collections can be a powerful source for greater community involvement and financial stability. We can propel our institutions toward safer, better protected, and more securely funded futures by utilizing the free resources, expertise, and models available.

California received a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, funded the Californians Connecting to Collections (C3) Project, to help museums, libraries, and archives promote awareness of collection care and raise funds to preserve California's heritage collections.

To help achieve these shared goals, the C3 project and its partners (see sidebar) are distributing the following references for trustees and staff:

- **Collection Stewardship Guide for Trustees.** This guide outlines some of the key or inexpensive steps libraries, museums, archives, and historical societies can take to use collections to raise funds and attract audiences. These are tested strategies that are being used all around you in California. Please copy and share the enclosed guide with your trustees or reference an electronic version at [www.calpreservation.org/toolkit](http://www.calpreservation.org/toolkit).

- **Capitalize on Collections Care.** This publication is an excellent resource that outlines successful approaches to collections-based fund raising and audience development. Please share the enclosed copy with your trustees or reference a version at [www.heritagepreservation.org/PDF5000b.pdf](http://www.heritagepreservation.org/PDF5000b.pdf).

- **Staff Guide to Free Preservation/Conservation Information and Training.** There are numerous free resources available to help staff increase their knowledge, plan for disasters, protect collections, and raise funds for preservation projects to enhance collection care. Please share the enclosed guide with your board charged with care of your collection or download an electronic version at [www.calpreservation.org/toolkit](http://www.calpreservation.org/toolkit).

Joining together to create a culture of collection stewardship in California helps all of us do our work with greater pride, satisfaction, and success. If you have any questions, please email [info@calpreservation.org](mailto:info@calpreservation.org).

Barbara Ogden  
Co-Coordinator, C3 and  
California Preservation Program

Deddy DeWald  
Co-Coordinator, C3, and  
Executive Director,  
California Association of Museums

This project made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute for  
Museum and Library Services
Californians Connecting to Collections

Collections Stewardship Guide for Trustees

Collections can be a ready source of income and audience expansion. Here are a few proven strategies for utilizing your most enduring asset.

Invite the public to sponsor a purchase.

The Museum of Photographic Art in San Diego displays a photograph in their lobby that they wish to purchase. With a donation box located just underneath, a text panel explains the significance of the photograph and how it would add to the museum’s collection and asks for a contribution. This simple display communicates to visitors that they can play a part in helping strengthen the organization’s collection.

This approach can also be used to invite sponsorship of a collections storage area. Post a photograph of a crowded shelving unit, or outfitted storage furniture (as the “before” shot next to a photograph of a new tandem storage structure with fresh archival boxes (as the “after”)—photographs which can come from a supplier’s brochure or other institution)—and invite the public to contribute to upgrading that space. The visuals make the difference, and you can even offer naming rights.

Let a cultural community invest in its own story.

The Fresno Historical Society (FHS) partnered with a photographer who documented the local Hmong community. Once the community was engaged through the process of having their daily life documented, Hmong community members came forward to offer historic photographs and documents to the Society’s collection and to support fundraising. Public presentations of the work FHS was doing in the Hmong community were used to draw support for documenting other cultural communities. The California Council of the Humanities funded the initial photography and the Irvine Foundation supported the exhibition and community presentations. FHS is now following the same model to engage other ethnic communities in Fresno. Finally, ethnic community members are joining the FHS board and raising funds to have their own heritage documented and preserved.

Invite the public to sponsor conservation treatment.

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHL/LA) spearheaded a very popular “sponsor a bone” program. Sponsorship amounts varied greatly (thousands of dollars for the largest bones and couple hundred for a tusk, for example). Visitors could watch the staff;

Continued on reverse

prepare the T-Rex bones and a text panel explained how the funds from the “sponsor a bone” program were directly helping the museum put the artifacts on display. Donors were promised to always have their name associated with the bone they selected and they received a memorable gift (a cast of a T-Rex tusk). A similar strategy worked for the California State Railroad Museum in its campaign to restore their famous Sierra No. 3 locomotive, housed at the 1897 State Historic Park in Jamestown, CA. The restoration campaign focused on Sierra No. 3’s star attraction, the engine, for the museum itself. Highlighting trains the locomotive was frequented in and celebrities who acted in them, the campaign turned the locomotive into a celebrity itself, bringing glamour to the act of supporting the museum.

Show how you’re unique.

The Alpine County Archives received a collections assessment grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Their grant application stressed the exceptional nature of Alpine County—by far the least populated county in California with a local population of around 1,300 to its scenic mountain surroundings spanning the Sierra crest, and its agricultural and mining history. This narrated an assessment grant, the results of which will be the foundation for a campaign to fund a new building.

Demonstrate the regional importance of your collection to a local company or community foundation.

The Laidlaw Fund for Historic Preservation, a local community foundation, supported the Monterey Public Library’s Shades of Monterey Community Days, in which the public was invited to have family photos scanned and added to library archives. This was popular with the public to help their family stories to the Library as well, and the Laidlaw Fund supported an additional grant to produce oral histories. People who participated in the oral histories, including historically important figures such as mayors and representatives of many local ethnic groups, became invested in the project and went on to join the Library and Foundation Council to raise new funds.

Simple steps to create a culture of collection stewardship:

- Make stewardship of the collection part of any new board member’s orientation.
- Create a fact sheet or list of frequently asked questions about the collection.
- As part of a board meeting, have board members on a “field trip” to see collections storage. Don’t be afraid to show the problem spots.
- Feature collections care topics regularly in board meeting agendas and information packets.
- When new acquisitions are presented to the board, ask for information on conservation and storage needs.

The Californians Connecting to Collections Project, a two-year statewide preservation project that provides information, education, and training to California heritage institutions. For more info, see www.calpreservation.org/services/02.html or email info@calpreservation.org.

You can download this document at www.calpreservation.org/toolkit
Californians Connecting to Collections
Staff Guide to Free Preservation/Conservation Information and Training

To help you do your job and further your institution’s mission

Free Workshops

- Protecting Cultural Collections: Disaster Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery, will give you:
  - A complete disaster response and collection salvage plan
  - The skills needed to train staff to implement your plan effectively
  - Pre- and post-disaster action priorities for your collections
  - Understanding of the practical decision making skills needed during an emergency
  - Experience salvaging a variety of materials including books, documents, photos and objects

Are You Ready? Scenario Planning & Collaboration Among Heritage Institutions to Improve Disaster Preparedness for Collections, will help you:

- Test emergency preparedness and response plans and identify areas for improvement
- Identify common scenarios that could impact your institution
- Improve participants ability to evaluate risks (via a pre-workshop self-survey)
- Encourage participants to develop disaster preparedness plans

Creating and Funding Preservation Projects To Enhance Collection Care, will help you:

- Outline a project proposal specific to your institution
- Identify possible funding sources
- Test your ideas with other workshop participants

(Find out more and register at www.ca.preservation.org/services/c3_workshops.html)

Free Information

- "Protecting Library and Archive Collections" Videotaped workshop
- Training guides for library staff, library collections care topics including mold, integrated pest management, and book repair

The California Preservation Program also offers an emergency toll-free number 888-395-7737 for collections disaster assistance for all types of heritage institutions.

Balboa Art Conservation Center’s Western Region Field Service Program supports preservation efforts at collections-based institutions throughout California. Services include workshops on basic preservation theory and practice, onsite preservation planning and hazard surveys, consultation on specific preservation issues, and reference services. The BACC website (www.bacc.org) features downloadable comprehensive regional guides to emergency preparedness resources, for both Southern and Northern California. In addition, BACC offers a free technical inquiry response service to assist institutions in researching a variety of preservation-related technical queries.

COCOL, or Conservation On Line (cool conservation-us.org) offers a lengthy catalog of articles on topics such as disaster planning and response, past management, and collections environments.

Heritage Preservation, online at www.heritagepreservation.org, is another rich resource. Heritage Preservation’s headline program is the Conservation Assessment Program and the guidelines and application can be found on their website. Other free lists include:

- Checklists for Emergency Response, including field guide assessment form and supply list.
- Working with Emergency Responders: Tips for Cultural Institutions and other publications to improve response to the effects of disasters on collections.


Connect to your local Regional Disaster Response Network. These networks offer advice, volunteer staff, and emergency supplies. To find a network in your area, see www.ca.preservation.org/about/network.html.

Free Discussion Lists

Participation on a preservation-oriented listserv will keep you up to date on new training opportunities and give you a space to turn to for advice and services. Your specialty—archives, registration, etc.—will also have its own listserv for your benefit.

CaLibAnn-Preventive Discussion List
- CaLibAnn-Preventive is an online mailing list dealing with preservation topics of interest to California heritage professionals: custodians, librarians, archivists, records managers, and other managers of heritage collections. Contact Librarian@ca-preservation.org to subscribe.

The Conservation Discussion List or CoreDataList, serves those professionally involved with the conservation and preservation of museum, archive, or library materials. Subscribe by sending an email request to request@COOL.conservation-us.org

This is just a start. See the resources at the back of the handbook. Lastly, these logs for more ideas. Or email info@ca.preservation.org.

You can download this document at www.ca.preservation.org/events/pdf/0010.pdf.
Mailed: 2,155
Visits: 763
Pages: 2.5
Time: 5:21
Step #2
The Pilot “Charrette”
What is a Charrette?

A collaborative session in which a group drafts a solution to a problem.
What is a Charrette?

A collaborative session in which a group drafts a solution to a problem.
Help MOPA
Buy This Print

ACTIVE SINCE 1988

the "Help-MOPA-Buy-This-Print" program has successfully supported museum acquisitions, resulting in nearly 25 additions to MOPA's permanent collection.

Your contribution goes directly toward the purchase of this print, and allows you to say "I donated to the permanent collection at MOPA."
What potential fundraising initiatives could your organization develop that could serve as a source of future income and audience expansion? Use the table below to help answer this question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
<th>ACTION ITEMS</th>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What specific collections-focused project/program/activity do you want to</td>
<td>What are the specific activities required to complete the objective? How will</td>
<td>What financial resources are needed? What other resources?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accomplish?</td>
<td>collections play a role?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Was this Charrette valuable to you in your work? Please check one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all valuable</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat valuable</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very valuable</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Charrette “Take-aways”

- Success in jumpstarting collections-centric fundraising
- Need to focus on public fundraising (vs. grant writing)
- Case studies and the toolkit were the favorites
- Group work was appreciated, but not quite as successful as the case studies, *probably because*...
 Participating institutions were not quite ready/willing to engage trustees in a collections-centric fundraising campaign (i.e. their needs were more basic than we anticipated or other issues were more pressing)

The audience most responsive to this program is staff, not our original target audience: trustees
Next Steps

• Steering Committee meeting October 30th
• Presentation at Museum Trustee Association Forum – November 2nd
• Explore webinar as future format
For more information:

http://calpreservation.org/cpp/projects/connecting-to-collections

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