

# Bringing the Past to the Future

The digitization of the Historic  
Photograph Collection  
of the  
Public Library of Brookline

Digital Commonwealth Annual Conference  
March 25, 2010

# Why Digitize?

- Preservation of fragile historic photographs
- Accessibility
- Demand for scanned images in particular:
  - Brookline 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration
  - Public Library of Brookline 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
  - Publication of the Library's History:
    - Public Library of Brookline: A History Celebrating 150 Years of Library Service 1857-2007
  - Requests for images by Town Agencies and individuals

# Getting Started

- Identified the collection, the reasons for scanning, benefits for preservation and access
- Formed committee with reference staff, library director, trustee
- Attended conferences, workshops on digital projects to gain knowledge
- Now what do we do???

# Next Steps

- Selected photographs from notebooks
- Determined copyright/fair use –who owns the rights to the images?
- Who will fund the scanning project?
- Where will the images be stored?
- Presented our proposal to library director and Board of Library Trustees

# Project Approved by Trustees

- Finalized the selection of 207 images to scan
- Contacted vendors for pricing
- Selected vendor
- Investigated standards for digital images
- Delivered originals to vendor
- Received DVD with Master Tiff and JPEG derivatives
- Created duplicate copy

# Metadata

- Unique identifier (required)
- Title (required)
- Creator
- Subject
- Description
- Date (yyyy/mm/dd)
- Format

# Entering Metadata

- Divided responsibility for entering metadata to 3 reference librarians
- Metadata entered in spreadsheet
- Each librarian checked the other entries making corrections/ additions as needed
- Images and metadata excel spreadsheet saved to CD

# Excel Spreadsheet

Brookline Photographs Metadata						
Unique Identifier	Title	Creator	Date	Subject	Description	Type
BrooklinePL_A11a	General Views - Miscellany	Published by L. P. Bond. Photo by Troy.		Savings Bank; Public Library; Longwood Bridge Parkway Congregational Church; Public Bath House; Court House; St. Mary's Church; Pierce School; High School; Harvard Square; Whitney Hall (S.S. Pierce Building); Baptist Church; Town Hall; Fire Station G; Riverdale Casino. Buildings, Public and Commercial. Schools. Churches.	A sheet of 15 souvenir stamps depicting various buildings and points of interest in Brookline.	Stamps
BrooklinePL_B2i	Brookline Parkway			Bridges; Brookline Parkway	Bridge on the Brookline Parkway.	Photograph
BrooklinePL_B9c	Soldier's Monument			Washington Street, School Street, Soldiers Monument, Edward Clark Potter (Sculptor), monuments and memorials	Soldiers' Monument designed by Edward Clark Potter, Sculptor located at the corner of Washington and School Streets. Inscribed "To the men of Brookline who heard the call of duty and offered their lives in the defense of the Union 1861-1865"	photograph

BrooklinePL_BPC-1	Brookline, MA Public Library	Hugh C. Leighton Co., Manufacturer, Portland, ME., USA. Made in Germany.		Public Library of Brookline; Postcard; Buildings. Public and Commercial.	Colorized postcard of the Public Library of Brookline. 1869 building with addition from Washington Street. Addressed to Miss Bertha E. Arnold, Woonsocket, R.I. From Lewis Little. No postmark.	Post card
BrooklinePL_C9b	DPW-Tree Spraying Equipment		pre-1916	Department of Public Works. DPW. Forestry Department. Horses. Trees.	Members of the Forestry Department (1 seated, 6 standing) with tree spraying equipment on a wagon pulled by 3 horses.	Photograph
BrooklinePL_HG228p	Gardner House	Marr, Thomas	1928	Gardner House, Warren Street, winter, Family of G. Peabody Gardner, Jr., horse, sleigh, houses and estates	The family of G. Peabody Gardner, Jr. in a horse drawn sleigh outside the Gardner House on Warren Street in the winter of 1928	photograph

# Suggestions

- When proofing entries in the repository we discovered errors in numbering between scanned images and excel spreadsheet. Be sure to double check everything!
- Be careful to put exact numbers in the metadata excel spreadsheet to correspond with images-punctuation and case count
- Not all images scanned from glass plate negatives were suitable for inclusion in the project due to cracked glass and/or image degradation
- When unsure of image subjects know who to contact for assistance – Historical Society, Preservation Commission, reference staff, etc.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions, consult the experts

# Useful contacts, web sites

- » **Digital Commonwealth**
- » [www.digitalcommonwealth.org](http://www.digitalcommonwealth.org)
- » **Lyrasis**
- » <http://www.lyrasis.org/Products-and-Services/Digital-Services/Digital-Commonwealth.aspx>
- » **Northeast Massachusetts Regional Library System (NMRLS)**
- » [www.nmrls.org/nmdl](http://www.nmrls.org/nmdl)
- » Guidelines for digitizing materials including a helpful
  - » checklist with links to copyright information.
  - » **Hirtle Chart**
  - » <http://www.copyright.cornell.edu/resources/publicdomain.cfm>
- » A guide for determining when images enter the public domain in the United States.

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