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 300th Anniversary Celebration
  - Public Library of Brookline 150th Anniversary
  - Publication of the Library’s History:
  - 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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unique Identifier</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Creator</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BrooklinePL_A11a</td>
<td>General Views - Miscellany</td>
<td>Published by L. P. Bond. Photo by Troy.</td>
<td></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>A sheet of 15 souvenir stamps depicting various buildings and points of interest in Brookline.</td>
<td>Stamps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BrooklinePL_B2i</td>
<td>Brookline Parkway</td>
<td>Brewed by L. P. Bond. Photo by Troy.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bridge on the Brookline Parkway.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Photograph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BrooklinePL_B9c</td>
<td>Soldier's Monument</td>
<td>Published by L. P. Bond. Photo by Troy.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Washington Street, School Street, Soldiers Monument, Edward Clark Potter (Sculptor), monuments and memorials</td>
<td>Soldiers' Monument designed by Edward Clark Potter, Sculptor located at the corner of Washington and School Streets. Inscribed &quot;To the men of Brookline who heard the call of duty and offered their lives in the defense of the Union 1861-1865&quot;</td>
<td>Photograph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object Code</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Maker/Manufacturer</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BrooklinePL_BPC-1</td>
<td>Brookline, MA Public Library</td>
<td>Hugh C. Leighton Co., Manufacturer, Portland, ME., USA. Made in Germany.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BrooklinePL_C9b</td>
<td>DPW-Tree Spraying Equipment pre-1916</td>
<td>Department of Public Works. DPW. Forestry Department. Horses. Trees.</td>
<td>Members of the Forestry Department (1 seated, 6 standing) with tree spraying equipment on a wagon pulled by 3 horses.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BrooklinePL_HG228p</td>
<td>Gardner House Marr, Thomas</td>
<td>1928 Gardner House, Warren Street, winter, Family of G. Peabody Gardner, Jr., horse, sleigh, houses and estates</td>
<td>The family of G. Peabody Gardner, Jr. in a horse drawn sleigh outside the Gardner House on Warren Street in the winter of 1928</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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

» Lyrasis

» Northeast Massachusetts Regional Library System (NMRLS)
 » 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.