Archival Products

NEWS

Developing a Preservation Program for the UCLA Library

By Jacob Nadal

THE UCLA LIBRARY IS ONE OF the nation's great academic libraries. Its collection of more than 8.5 million cataloged items supports the work of one of our greatest universities, with UCLA ranked at or near the top of almost any metric you could choose. Along with core collections supporting the research and instruction of thousands of students, faculty, staff and community members, it is filled with wonders. The UCLA Library's special collections have done any number of singular and incredible things—flown on the space shuttle, strutted down the red carpet, or launched a revolution—and together, they are witnesses to the entire course of recorded history.

Despite all that, the UCLA Library has had very little in the way of preservation support over the first 90 years of its existence. In 1984 UCLA participated in the University of California Preservation Implementation Program. This lead to a collection survey and the appointment of a full-time preservation administrator, Christopher Coleman. The

Fine illumination on 1608 Armenian scroll

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Preservation Imaging Unit of the Southern Regional Library Facility (SRLF) was founded in the 1980s to offer preservation reformatting to both UCLA and other UC campuses. However, over the course of the next 20 years, adapting to budget cuts and changing

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library needs led to a reduction of preservation efforts. The preservation administrator's role was diminished and combined with other job duties. Primary collection care activities were carried on within individual library units with dedication but minimal coordination.

University Librarian Gary Strong arrived at UCLA in 2003 and made preservation a priority. With support from the Mellon Foundation, the library established its first centralized conservation laboratory and hired its first conservator. During the development and implementation of the 2006-09 UCLA Library Strategic Plan, the establishment of a Preservation Program was a clearly articulated priority. In support of this, the hiring of a Preservation Officer was approved. I joined the UCLA Library in that role in June 2008, and I'm pleased to share these initial observations on the course of preservation at the UCLA Library with the readers of *Archival Products NEWS*. We are a few years out from having the whole preservation program in place at UCLA Library. However, in these first few months, several themes have emerged that, taken together, suggest one path toward having preservation serve as a key function of the 21st-century research library.

Supporting daily operations

Like all research libraries, UCLA Library finds itself in transition as we build a ubiquitous digital library around the print- and placed-based functions that have evolved since we opened our doors as the Los Angeles State Normal School on August 29, 1882. Formal business continuity planning (BCP) or continuity of operations planning have emerged as preservation tools that address several related problems and help us navigate this transition. These planning methodologies have allowed us to find mutually engaging solutions to problems where traditional preservation efforts and institutional priorities may appear to be in conflict.

Environmental control offers one illustration

UCLA Library Conservation Center

of this approach, as we attempt to be good stewards of our intellectual and natural resources. To achieve this, we start our environmental planning outside, by looking for prevailing weather conditions that provide beneficial environments for free. By understanding those conditions, we can develop the framework in which modifications are made to address specific collection environments, such as public stacks, special collections, or long-term storage. This allows our engineers to work on clearly scoped problems, making it much easier to develop energy-efficient solutions that meet collection needs. Despite the shortage of cool weather in Los Angeles, our first pilot project in special collections increased our preservation index by over 10% while saving around $5,000 in energy costs. We hope to increase these savings by an order of magnitude, at least, as we develop optimizations for the rest of the library.

Library binding, traditionally decentralized at UCLA Library, is also changing as we make preservation an integral part of operations. Our survey data suggests that by the time most items show significant wear and tear, the items have already been moved to the SRLF due to our overriding space management concerns. Conditions in the SRLF dramatically reduce handling and environmental decay. As we centralize our bindery operations, we are ramping up a "shelf-worthy" initiative that passes materials directly into the stacks as long as they meet a basic set of

physical criteria, regardless of whether they are serials or monographs. On the intake side, if it's ready for the shelf, to the shelf it goes. On the circulation side, if an item is damaged, it goes for treatment.

Reducing our prospective binding will create an increase in repair work over time, but the net effect is to free up resources for the repair of circulating materials and preservation services for collections of all types. This approach lets us manage our demand for binding services in a deliberate way by focusing on the ongoing need for corrective repairs, instead of responding to unpredictable changes in serials subscriptions. In effect, we are aligning binding services more directly with local needs for printed materials throughout our collections rather than managing them as a byproduct of a serials subscription process that is driven by e-journal licensing at a system wide level.

Promoting the artifact

Kristen St. John joined the UCLA Library in 2004, and in the last five years, her work and that of technician Wil Lin have been integrated

1608 Armenian scroll

further into regular library operations. As of 2009 the Library Conservation Center (LCC) is the heart of our new preservation program.

In the midst of all of the changes that are taking place in libraries, special collections remain a clear point of value, and we depend on our conservator to articulate the fundamental identity and value of these objects as objects. The treatment, research and analytical work performed at the LCC support exhibits, digitization efforts, and scholarly engagement with the artifacts in our care. Conservation leads us to understand the importance of our collections in ways that augment the work of our curators and catalogers. Two examples of this are the support for our large-scale digitization partnership with the Open Content Alliance (OCA) and the identification of an Armenian devotional scroll dating from 1608.[1]

Our conservator was able to work with the OCA staff to address handling concerns for special collections materials and developed workflows that stabilize materials in a fast, reversible fashion. This has allowed us to shift our large-scale digitization efforts from essentially random "shelf-clearing" to the deliberate creation of digital versions of the UCLA Library's unique collections.

In a recent example of how conservation enhances our understanding of the collections themselves, the Center for Primary Research and Testing uncovered an Armenian scroll in poor physical condition while looking for an item to be used in an upcoming video as an example of conservation need. The minimal level catalog record identified this as an Armenian scroll, with illustrations throughout, c. 19th century. As she opened and reviewed the scroll, it became obvious that it is more than it initially seemed, dating to 1608, filled with fine illuminations and inscribed with several hands as the scroll was handed down through the centuries. Work on this item has drawn in colleagues from the Getty Conservation Institute and scholars

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of Armenian textual history, as well. Although this particular project is still unfurling, it is a potent reminder that conservation is an essential avenue into the networks of professional expertise that the library exists to support.

Developing digital services

UCLA Library, like many of its peers, spends about half of its materials budget on digital resources. That level of commitment, coupled with our growing awareness of these collections' permanent research value, demands preservation involvement. At UCLA Library, we are taking the point of view that the ethics of conservation still must apply, regardless of format. When we have digital content of authentic or evidentiary value, the original must remain intact. Where the value is primarily intellectual, we have options for substitutes and surrogates.

Once we have adjusted to seeing digital objects through a lens of conservation, it is easier to think about preservation management in a way that is applicable across the radically different formats we rely on. It is no accident that the risk assessment and BCP process that have been so helpful to our traditional preservation management strategy developed in the IT sector as a way to address the problems in maintaining 24/7 electronic services. Although this has not yet produced a lot of software, it has given us some common points of assessment.

For instance, as a first step in digital preservation, we need to have a large, secure data storage system, just as we require secure, climate-controlled storage as a first step in preservation of our print collections. The California Digital Library's Digital Preservation Repository is helping us fill that role digitally, just as the SRLF is helping us address these issues in the physical realm.

Digital objects also require periodic assessment and repair, just like their physical counterparts. The UCLA Library is testing a number of approaches to this problem. Our

LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) pilot provides a good example of how conservation questions can help us navigate digital preservation issues. Migration is occasionally required to transform an original file to a more contemporary format. LOCKSS allows for migration-on-demand, which keeps the original files intact on the server and provides a reformatted version to the user along with the original source code of any web-pages. This lets the user view a resource in a state that is as close to original as possible, something we try to achieve already in our physical conservation treatments.

Making the parts into a whole

The most important outcome of this first year is that we are developing a single language to talk about preservation of all kinds. Preservation has to speak to numerous audiences about their specific preservation issues. Using some common vocabulary for preservation helps us to give each stakeholder a little more understanding of how preservation issues play out elsewhere in the library. With all of this said, there is still a great deal ahead of us at the UCLA Library. Unifying these parts into a whole and developing robust, sustainable programs out of these many initiatives will take a few years. We are making a lot of progress in finding ways to talk about preservation across the library. We are only just beginning to find out how to put preservation issues into a better perspective across the UCLA Library's timeline. With the UCLA Library preparing to create a new strategic plan in the face of a global economic crisis, managing risks and being good stewards of our resources has never been more important.

1. See http://www.archive.org/details/gross and http://www.archive.org/details/f_nightingale for recent examples and a complete listing of collections from UCLA/OCA partnership at http://www.archive.org/details/americana.

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Rescuing Irreplaceable Records from Capitols to Closets

By David W. Carmicheal, Director, The Georgia Archives, and Chair, IPER Advisory Board

WHEN THE UNIVERSITY of Texas Medical Branch Library was built in the 1960s, it was designed to house collections on the second floor or higher. As a result, when the tidal surge from Hurricane Ike struck the building in 2008, it took out the bookstore and a Starbucks on the first floor but no collections. Planning paid off! That fact is at the heart of three initiatives by the Council of State Archivists (CoSA) intended to identify and protect essential records wherever they reside, from state capitols to family closets and every place in between. Collectively, the three projects are called The Emergency Preparedness Initiative.

The Emergency Preparedness Initiative (EPI)
Like so many other projects, EPI developed in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. During 2006 CoSA conducted a self-assessment of archives and records management (ARM) agencies in all 50 states to determine their readiness to protect their own records from disaster and their ability to assist state and local government agencies do the same. Not surprisingly, the assessment showed a significant lack of resources and preparedness across the nation. The report of the assessment, *Safeguarding a Nation's Identity*, concluded that

> "When an emergency threatens or damages records, it is natural to seek advice and support from the ARM program, the state government agency in which expertise on records resides. The ability of state ARM programs to respond to these calls for assistance varies widely across the country.

A few are ready and willing to come to the aid of institutions whose records are affected by disaster, while others are not even able to provide adequate protection for their own holdings."

CoSA set two goals: in the short-range, to help ARM agencies protect their own records; longer-range CoSA hoped to increase the readiness of state and local governments nationwide.

Self-Assessment and PReP Templates
CoSA developed two tools to help ARM agencies become better prepared: the self-assessment itself became the first tool. The assessment guided the ARM agency to take an objective look not only at its own institutional preparedness plan but also at its relationships with state emergency managers, state information technology officials, and others who play a role in protecting records from disaster. It also analyzed the availability of disaster response resources—such as money for short-term loans, freezer facilities, trucks, and supplies—and training for state and local personnel. Responses were plotted on a gauge to indicate relative readiness. Collective results indicated the level of overall preparedness. In this way the self-assessment tool provided a roadmap to better preparedness.

ARM agencies across the nation have now completed a second assessment—three years after the first—and the results are encouraging; ARM agencies have improved their readiness overall. The assessment provides a path for each ARM to improve its readiness, and repeating the assessment periodically helps motivate that improvement. (See Figure 1: Example of Self-Assessment Tool next page.)

When the tidal surge from Hurricane Ike struck the building in 2008, it took out the bookstore and a Starbucks on the first floor but no collections.

CoSA's second tool is useful in all types of cultural repositories: the PReP template. (See Figure 2: PReP template.) PReP is a customizable document that, on one side, lists emergency contact information (such as phone numbers for staff, vendors, and others) and, on the other side, first response instructions for stabilizing and rescuing a threatened collection. The online template can be customized for any type of repository—even for families—and the printed document folds to fit into a credit-card size PReP envelope (made of Tyvek) that slips into your purse or wallet. (See Figure 3: PReP envelope.) The template is available at http://www.statearchivists.org/prepare/framework/prep.htm.

Figure 1: Example of Self-Assessment Tool

Rescuing Family Records

"I have a 'grab-and-go' bag ready to use if a hurricane evacuation is ordered. What personal papers should I have in that bag?" That question, posed in 2006, led to CoSA's publication, *Rescuing Family Records: A Disaster Planning Guide.* This author, who was then CoSA's president, was conducting sessions to raise awareness about record protection among local governments along Georgia's Atlantic coast. During a question and answer period, one of the participants raised the question about evacuations and personal papers. Experience along the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina had shown

that employees who are struggling to put their personal lives back together cannot be expected to help restore order and services to governments and cultural repositories. CoSA realized that protecting essential family records is a critical link in the chain of response and recovery.

Rescuing Family Records is a manual that briefly explains why family records should be protected during a disaster and suggests various methods of accomplishing that protection. (See Figure 4: *Rescuing Family Records*.) The heart of the manual, though, is a chart that lists potentially-essential family records and provides a place to record whether and where the record is backed up. (See Figure 5: *Rescuing Family*

Figure 3: PReP envelope

Figure 2: PReP template

Records Sample Template.) *Rescuing Family Records* has been well received—one reviewer said, "This timely work puts the expertise of the archives profession at the service of the general public and meets a vitally important need in the process."—and proceeds from the manual are used by CoSA to fund activities within the Emergency Preparedness Initiative. It is available on CoSA's website (www.StateArchivists.org).

IPER

The culmination of CoSA's Emergency Preparedness Initiative is the Intergovernmental Preparedness for Essential Records (IPER) project, an ambitious attempt to train at least 10,000 state and local government officials to identify and protect essential records.

Essential records play a key role when disaster strikes: They are necessary to rapidly restore government services and to help protect critical infrastructure. Without essential records, governments would not have the information needed to recall personnel to work, delegate authority, activate alternate work sites, mobilize responders, and continue payroll and benefits functions for employees. (See Figure 6: Essential Records next page.)

The IPER Project is a three-year grant-funded program that will provide records-related emergency preparedness training for state, territorial, local, and tribal governments.

This training has been made possible by a $2.6 million grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

IPER Project training will include two six-hour courses, Essential Records and Records Emergency Planning and Response. These courses will focus on
- identifying and prioritizing critical business needs and records;
- assessing risks and identifying protection strategies;
- outlining an essential records plan;
- understanding applicable federal, state, and local COOP regulations and procedures;
- relating records emergency planning to COOP plans and procedures;
- planning, developing, analyzing, and testing a records emergency plan;
- assessing the damage to records after an emergency and implement a response; and,
- identifying federal, state, and local resources and the availability of intergovernmental personnel and support to assist when a disaster occurs.

In addition, IPER will offer a one-hour self-directed Introduction to Records Management course for workers who are not familiar with basic records management procedures prior to taking the primary IPER courses. It will familiarize them with basic terminology, prepare them to maintain electronic records and special
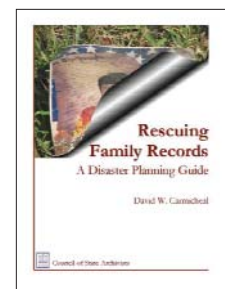

Figure 4: *Rescuing Family Records*

ESSENTIAL RECORDS CHECKLISTS

Record	Description and Comments	Category	Check here if not applicable (Do not duplicate)	May be duplicated by	Duplicates Does duplicate need to be certified? (see p.18)	Location of duplicate	Last duplicated on:
Banking information	Checking and savings account numbers and routing numbers. Online account numbers, User ID, passwords.	Essential		Your bank or other financial institution.			
Birth certificate	A certified copy of each family members' official birth certificate.	Essential		The town, county, or state in which you were born. Check with the Town or County Clerk or the State department of vital statistics.	Yes		
Checklist of essential family records	A copy of the forms in this manual.	Essential					

Figure 5: *Rescuing Family Records* Sample Template

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ments have told
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cost are the two
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for them when
seeking training.*

Essential Records	
Are records that:	**Examples Include:**
Are necessary for emergency response	• copy of emergency plan/COOP • infrastructure and utility plans • maps and building plans • emergency contact information
Protect the health, safety, property, and rights of residents	• deeds, mortgages, land records • birth and marriage records • medical records • active court proceedings • education & military service records • voting records • professional licenses
Are necessary to resume or continue oper-ations	• delegations of authority • contracts & leases • payroll • jail & parole records • insurance records
Would require massive resources to reconstruct	• Geographic Information Systems data • tax records
Document the history of communities and families	• historical documents • photographs • identity records

Figure 6: Essential Records

media, and understand that sound records management procedures are critical for ensuring that records survive disasters.

One goal of IPER is to make these courses easily accessible for state, local, and tribal government employees. Local governments have told CoSA that distance and cost are the two biggest barriers for them when seeking training. As a result, IPER training will be offered in three formats:

• Webinars led by members of Instructional Teams in each state and territory;
• Self-directed online courses offered through FEMA's online Emergency Management Institute; and
• Self-directed versions on CDs that will be distributed widely.

The online and CD-based delivery modes will make these courses available to anyone with a computer; the courses will be offered free-of-charge through FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI); and most of the training led by the state-based Instructional Teams will be delivered at little or no cost to the trainee.

Each state and territory is now forming an Instructional Team with representatives recruited to represent emergency management, information technology, archives, records management, and local government. Starting in September 2009 the Instructional Teams will be trained at regional Train-the-Trainer workshops, then they will conduct the IPER webinars in their states.

Finally, the IPER Project's grant will fund a Resource Center to provide state and local government employees nationwide with authoritative advice that supplements what they have learned through the IPER webinars and self-directed training. The Resource Center will include laws, regulations, and best practices customized to each state and territory.

The principles and techniques incorporated in the IPER courses, and the customized information in the Resource Center, will be applicable to many nongovernment archival repositories, libraries, museums, and other cultural organizations.

For more information about the IPER Project, visit CoSA's web site at http://www.statearchivists.org/iper/ or contact the IPER Project staff at 678-364-3806. The staff is located at The Georgia Archives, 5800 Jonesboro Road, Morrow, GA 30260.