Abstract

The University of North Texas Libraries’ seek $11,840 to provide access to and education about the rich visual histories of Denton, Texas. This project will support the digitization of community materials related to the motion picture history of Denton, TX including 40,000 feet of film, 300 hours of videotape, and 1,000 documents. The project will support access and education by providing unrestricted online access to digitized content and programming that will situate Denton within Texas’ film history. Denton has a long but unexplored history of commercial and amateur film production dating to 1913 when the city funded a film about their town, Denton: City of Education. Unfortunately, this history has not been preserved or collected. Focusing on materials related to our filmic past—home movies, amateur film, advertisements, posters and photographs—we will illuminate the value of locally created records and redefine how small towns like Denton contributed to film history.
A. What is the significance of this event to the community’s members and its cultural institutions?

Through a collaboration with the Texas Archive of the Moving Image (TAMI), the University of North Texas Libraries (UNT) plans to preserve and provide access to the rich visual histories of Denton, Texas. With a focus on the motion picture history of Denton County, this program will digitize and provide unrestricted access to home movies, amateur films, and other documents related to film production and distribution including advertisements, ticket stubs, and still photographs. Through a day-long community outreach and digitization event and subsequent public programming, we will highlight the value of community records. These materials are a crucial part of our public record. Home movies in particular are valuable documents of our culture. Such materials not only provide a moving history of known people and events but also provide opportunities to redraw archival power dynamics by illuminating less frequently canonized histories. By providing a glimpse into these histories—capturing emotions and mannerisms, regional accents and customs, festivals and rituals—we will emphasize the significance of locally created records and public history to the creation of the historical and scholarly record. By collecting materials relating to the history of local movie production and distribution, we also aim to deconstruct beliefs surrounding Hollywood’s primacy in motion picture history and seek to redefine how smaller towns like Denton, Texas contributed to and influenced film production.

Home to two universities--UNT and Texas Woman’s University (TWU)--Denton, Texas has a long and unexplored history of film production. Alumni from North Texas State University (now UNT) and TWU, include actresses Rose “Joan” Blondell and Clara Lou “Ann” Sheridan; writer and actor Peter Weller; and writer and director Joe Camp.1 Through the 1970s, Denton was also a hub for motion picture distribution with several movie houses lining the small town square. In 1951 a “caravan” of Hollywood stars including John Wayne stopped in Denton as part of a Movie Town USA program.2 Bonnie and Clyde (1967) was filmed extensively within Denton County and had its Southwest premiere at the Campus Theater in downtown Denton. Denton also has a long history of amateur and regional film production dating back to 1913 when a local movie theater owner and the Chamber of Commerce teamed up to shoot a community-based film, Denton: City of Education. This film shows Denton residents participating in an “education rally,” female college students playing basketball, and a demonstration of the town’s fire engine. Limited information is available about the film and no prints are currently available.3 Another local production Dynamic Denton (1967), was recently rediscovered and digitized by the UNT Libraries. Made as part of an ambitious city promotional campaign, the film features local luminaries Phyllis George (Miss America 1971) and Joe Camp (creator of the Benji films) in

---

locations around town praising the town of Denton. UNT is currently planning an exhibit for this film.

Until recently there has been little effort to preserve and provide access to these moving image histories. UNT began investing in moving image preservation by hiring a full-time moving image preservation librarian in 2015 and continues to expand their digitization laboratory. UNT acquired the NBC 5/KXAS television news collection and are working to digitize and provide unrestricted access to the entire collection on the Portal to Texas History. The Chamber collection contains audiovisual items related to the Dynamic Denton campaign and home movies which document the 1938 County Fair, 1950s-era downtown businesses, and a visit from Speaker of the House Ben Barnes. The Texas Archive of the Moving Image (TAMI) is an ideal collaborator for this project. TAMI is an independent 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization working to discover, preserve, provide access to, and educate the community about Texas’ film heritage. By working with institutions and individuals across the state, TAMI digitizes and provides unrestricted web access to thousands of moving images that offer insight to Texas’ history and culture. TAMI promotes the sharing of Texas moving images via screenings, demonstrations, and lectures at venues across the state. TAMI also creates lesson plans featuring its collection offered free to educators interested and able to use Texas film in the K-12 social studies classroom. TAMI is partnered with the Office of the Governor’s Texas Film Commission for their ground-breaking “Texas Film Round-Up” program which has resulted in tens of thousands of newly digitized material for Texas families, museums, colleges, historical societies and more. TAMI has garnered the American Association for State and Local History’s highest award on two separate occasions: for the Film Round-Up program as well as for its 2012 website redesign. TAMI has also collaborated with libraries and universities on Humanities Texas History Harvest projects.

By providing the community with free digitization of home movies and related items as well as information concerning media preservation, the UNT libraries will strengthen its ties to the community and also expand the variety of primary source materials available to researchers, genealogists, and educators. By encouraging participation from all community members and emphasizing the cultural value of personal histories, the project acts as a democratizing force on the historical record. Public programming following the intake event will feature lectures by media studies scholar, University of Texas at Austin professor, and TAMI founder, Dr. Caroline Frick, and UNT faculty as well as a screening of materials obtained through the public digitization event. The programming will situate Denton’s motion picture history within the larger history of Texas filmmaking and emphasize the historic and cultural value of personal records such as home movies. During and after the screening, community members will be encouraged to share their knowledge about locations, events, and people shown in the digitized materials and thus enrich the historic record.

---

B. What arrangements need to be made to digitize the public’s cultural heritage materials, to get information for the metadata describing each item, and to provide access to the digital copies?

At the community outreach event to be held at the UNT Willis Library, TAMI and UNT staff will evaluate and digitize community records and provide resources for long-term material preservation. The focus will be the motion picture history of Denton County including home movies, photographs, advertisements, and posters. UNT and TAMI will provide free digitization of up to 1,000 feet of motion picture film, 5 videotapes, and 25 documents per person. The UNT Digital Projects Unit Hannah Tarver and 2 students will donate time to evaluate and digitize the documents, record metadata, and provide digital copies on flash drives. UNT Libraries will provide the digitization equipment and donate the flash drives for digital copies of these materials. UNT’s standards for digitizing documents and photographs are consistent with archival standards and best practices. Tarver will oversee file ingest and metadata creation for digitized documents.

TAMI staff and the UNT project director, Laura Treat, will evaluate and record metadata for the film and videotapes. The following film and video formats can be digitized: 16mm, 8mm and Super 8mm, VHS, S-VHS, VHS-C, Betamax, Betacam, U-Matic, Hi8, DVCPro, and Mini-DV. TAMI will digitize film in their Austin office. Treat will donate time and equipment to digitize video at the UNT Media Library. Digitization will be performed by trained archivists and digitization experts. Treat, Madeline Moya (TAMI) and Afsheen Nomai (TAMI) are all experienced in the handling, inspection and digitization of moving images and creating metadata records. They have worked at similar events through TAMI’s Film Roundup program. TAMI and UNT employ best practices for preservation and digitization of archival moving image materials following recommendations made by the Association of Moving Image Archivists. See the attached “Technical Plan” for more details.

TAMI and UNT will share the digitized video and film content via hard drive and ingest the content onto their servers. TAMI’s administrator will contact program participants to coordinate the transfer of digitized materials to hard drive or DVDs. Original materials will be returned via FedEx, each shipment with a unique tracking number. Both TAMI and UNT will retain copies of the digitized materials so materials in shipment are no longer the only existing copies, ensuring preservation of the content.

TAMI and UNT will help participants complete metadata worksheets including information about the creator, date range, and geographic coverage. Because participants may not know the content of the film and video, they will also be asked to contribute metadata after they have viewed their digital copies. Treat will oversee metadata creation for the digitized material that will appear on the Portal to Texas History using the UNTL Metadata Element Set which is documented with input and style guidelines on the UNT Libraries Website. Moya will oversee searchable metadata creation for a curated selection of materials that will be available on TAMI’s website using an in-house controlled vocabulary that includes subject keywords customized for regional film and video. Moya will share UNT’s metadata and extend it to meet the requirements of their system. Participants will be given the opportunity to share materials on
TAMI’s website and the Portal to Texas History. Materials will be available for streaming without restriction or cost. Both TAMI and UNT will ingest the digital files onto their servers, but UNT will assume primary responsibility for long-term digital preservation. Digital master files will be stored in the UNT Libraries digital repository system (CODA), which is replicated between two geographically distant facilities. All content in the Portal is highly indexed by popular search engines. The Portal is a Digital Public Library of America service-Hub for the state of Texas and Portal resources are automatically loaded into the DPLA each month.

C. In digitizing and providing access to the public’s historical materials, what plans will be in place to deal with intellectual property rights and the permissions process?
Both TAMI and UNT have policies in place to secure permissions for digitization, displaying materials online, and for preventing copyright infringement (see attached). The Portal to Texas History’s agreement gives UNT the permission to host and publish the materials online and provide free access to the materials for research, teaching, and private study. Donors must be contacted for permission before materials may be used for publication or commercial use. Participants in TAMI’s program retain copyright to their materials in exchange for free digitization services and permission to use a digitized copy of their materials in TAMI’s online collection and for educational purposes such as K-12 educator resources and online exhibitions. Participants may eliminate public access and remove the digital file from storage at any time by contacting the Project Director at TAMI and UNT. Neither TAMI nor UNT will digitize material under copyright protection.

D. What kind or kinds of public programming are proposed?
At the intake event, there will be an exhibit on Texas media history and film preservation, educational materials on home media preservation, and a screening of archival footage of North Texas. After materials have been digitized and originals returned, a lecture and screening of materials collected during the event will be hosted at a Denton area community center. Using these materials, media studies scholar and TAMI founder Caroline Frick will situate Denton’s motion picture history in the larger context of Texas’ film heritage. A member of the UNT History Faculty will give a lecture based on the content of the materials received at the event. Moya and Treat will coordinate the guest speakers. Promotional materials will announce the public programming and invite all participants to attend this free event. The event will be promoted on TAMI and UNT websites, social media, at community centers, and on local television and radio.

E. What is the plan of work for the project?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals &amp; Team Members</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Jan. - Feb. 2016     | Project Kickoff  
|                      | - Moya  
|                      | - Treat  
|                      | 1. Event logistics and personnel training  
|                      | 2. Create curated reel of North Texas footage for the event |
| March - May 2016     | Promotion  
|                      | - Moya  
|                      | - Treat  
<p>|                      | 1. Design, print, and distribute marketing and exhibit materials |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| May 2016     | Intake & Outreach Event              | 1. Evaluate and collect materials  
2. Complete metadata worksheets and permissions forms  
3. Digitize documents and provide copies  
4. Provide preservation resources  
5. Ingest digitized documents and metadata |
2. Ingest digitized film and video  
3. Create digital copies |
| Dec. 2016 - April 2017 | Metadata & Public Program            | 1. TAMI return digital copies and original materials  
2. Create and share metadata and catalog records  
3. Create a theme and curate material for event  
4. Coordinate speakers for public event |
| April 2017   | Public Programming                   | 1. Screening of digitized content with guest speakers |
| Ongoing      | Metadata & Outreach                  | 1. Continued exchange of metadata based on community feedback |