

Pennsylvania Architecture Image Collection Project Proposal

Grant Proposal for LIS 2700

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Grant Proposal

Executive Summary

In 2000, the late Dr. Frank Ferguson donated a substantial collection of 35mm slides that he photographed during his lifetime and used during his teaching career at the Harrisburg campus of The Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Ferguson's academic interests lied primarily in architecture and urban planning, with a significant portion of the slides reflecting modern architecture from the local Harrisburg and Lancaster areas as well as other historical Pennsylvania sites.

Currently this collection is inadequately maintained, poorly organized, and inaccessible. The preservation, organization, and development of an accompanying informational website with digital versions of these images will make the collection available to anyone interested in historical Pennsylvania architecture. By making the images accessible in both original and digital formats, those who are unable to be in the physical presence of the building can access an image in either 35mm slide or digital image format. Furthermore, by creating a searchable database for the images, those doing research may find new historical sites they will be interested in visiting.

Portions of the collection are dedicated to the architecture of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, the planning of Nelson, Township, and images from Frank Lloyd Wright's Pennsylvania designs. Many of the images depict the historic sites the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission work to preserve, with a select number of images taken of architectural works that no longer exist. With this project, it is our hope that the images can last in perpetuity and be accessible to a wide audience, so that those beyond Pennsylvania's borders can explore the rich architectural history it has to offer.

Needs Assessment

Currently Dr. Ferguson's life work is unusable and decaying. The organization system that Dr. Ferguson used for his slides was highly personal and very general. Unfortunately, this system is not intuitive to the general population, and it is impossible to know if a specific work has been photographed without thumbing through the entire collection. The slides are in unlabeled plastic cases, with each box containing a "guide" to its contents. In total there are 10 cases, each containing approximately 300 slides, which are kept in a metal storage cabinet separated from the rest of the collection. The non-archival storage cases do not preserve the slides, and the individual slides are mounted in their cardboard which does nothing to protect the slides from mold or physical damage as they are prone to being bent without the support of a mount sturdier than cardboard.

Even with proper archival practices in order, the images will eventually lose their vibrant colors, and begin to turn pink. Through duplication of the images in a digital format, the images can be stored in a more stable environment, while being made available to a wider audience. Furthermore, if the original slide is damaged or lost, a new 35mm slide can be made from the digital image, thus the image will not be completely gone. These images will be uploaded to the internet and placed into a searchable online database. While preservation is a concern, organization into a usable collection is also an area in which the collection is in need of attention. The previously mentioned "guides" do offer a sufficient amount of information that can serve as a starting point for research into what specific sites the slides document. Upon identifying the specific image

contents, the slides can be labeled accordingly in order to be filed into the Special Collections area of the Slide Library.

Goals and Objectives

The addition of the Frank Ferguson slides to the regular collection will provide an essential tool for the large American Studies program at the college, but will be useful to a broader community as well. Because the images document many locations throughout the South-Central region of Pennsylvania, which includes historic Lancaster and York counties as well as the area immediately surrounding and including the state capitol, scholars from throughout the region will be able to use the collection for lectures nationwide. Additionally, images of historic architecture from other places in Pennsylvania, such as Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, will be of interest on a state-wide level. The collection will serve as a supplement to individual research and interests. Students from the area may use the collection for research projects and presentations, as well as for exploration of individual interest.

Making the collection available for viewing in the online environment will also serve as a way to generate interest in visiting historical sites throughout Pennsylvania. The proposed website will not only hold the images, but also descriptive terms, links to existing websites affiliated with the historical site, and links between the images so that a user may find historical sites with similar characteristics whether they be architectural or geographical. This type of finding aid will not only direct traffic to other websites, but it may also direct visitors to the physical locations the images document.

Circulation of the collection as well as web site visitation will serve as the immediate concrete measure of the success of these projects, though secondary effects may be seen in the rise of visitation to historic sites within Pennsylvania and greater interest and research projects on the subject of local architecture.

Methodology and Project Description

The process will begin by mounting the slides into GEPE Anti-Newton Glass slide mounts, which will protect the film from damage during the remainder of the processing and beyond. Once slides are removed from their cardboard mounts and placed into the glass mounts, they will be returned to their original boxes in their current order so that they will be identifiable from the guides Dr. Ferguson has left.

While slides are being mounted, a database will be created containing fields, including (but not limited to) location, date, architect, link to the official site, and keywords. Each slide will be individually researched in order to create the best descriptive record for the database, and the information will be entered into the database as well as be used to create a label to place on the slide mount. This label will include a catalogue number so that it can be ordered appropriately within the collection, and that catalogue number will also be referenced by the online database so that any digital image found can easily be found in a 35mm format as well.

Because the scanning process will be outsourced, the slides will be sent for scanning after they have been labeled and records have been created. The slides will be sent out in groups in order to expedite the overall project and ensure that processing will continue on our end while the slides are being scanned. Once the slides are returned with

the digital images, the digital representations will be entered into the database and uploaded to the internet. For records in which the digital image has not yet been received, a placeholder image stating the imaged unavailability will be in place.

Timeline

Task	Responsible Person(s)	Begin Date	Finish Date
Database Creation: <i>Purchase of software, creation of record template.</i>	Slide Librarian and Electronic Resources Librarian	11/01/2006	12/15/2006
Mounting Slides: <i>Removal from cardboard mounts, preparation, and mounting.</i>	Slide Assistants	11/01/2006	02/28/2007
Data Entry: <i>Research of slide content and entry of representative data into database.</i>	Slide Librarian and Slide Assistants	01/01/2007	04/30/2007
Labeling: <i>Creation of labels, printing labels, and affixing labels to slide mounts.</i>	Slide Assistants	01/01/2007	04/30/2007
Scanning: <i>Slides will be mailed to the vendor each month, which will be returned with digital images.</i>	Larsen Digital Services	02/01/2007	05/31/2007
Web Site: <i>Creation of accompanying website.</i>	Library Computing Consultant	03/01/2007	03/31/2007
Physical Integration: <i>Once scanned and returned, slides will be filed into the collection, which includes the creation of range markers.</i>	Slide Assistants	03/01/2007	06/30/2007

Digital Integration: <i>Digital images will be loaded into the database and uploaded to the web.</i>	Library Computing Consultant	03/01/2007	06/30/2007
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Evaluation Process

Evaluation of progress will take place at monthly meetings, at which point we will assess the current state of the project. The first meeting to take place at the end of November, will numerically assess the progress of the mounting process, as well as discuss proposed database software and record contents. The second meeting at the beginning of January will be used to train staff in the new database software and to revisit the progress of mounting. The February meeting will see the completion of the mounting progress, and assess the labeling and data entry progress in terms of number completed. This meeting will also be used to discuss the first shipping of slides for scanning, as well as what elements should be included in the online site.

The Mid-March meeting will mark the half-way point of the project, at which the Library Computing Consultant will unveil the preliminary website for evaluation. Also by the March meeting the first set of scanned slide should be returned with their accompanying digital reproduction. Staff will present the results and begin integrating the slides and digital images into their respective collections. In April, a full demonstration of the online database and finalized website will be expected, so that the initial public release can take place by the end of the month. Additionally, staff will present circulation statistics of the physical slides since integration.

Finally, the May, June and July meetings will address the continued progress in terms of completion percentage, as well as statistical evaluation. Upon release of the

website there will be record kept of the number of weekly visits to the site. After a six-month period, this statistic will be kept monthly. The physical collection will be measure in terms of circulation, with a monthly record kept of total circulating slides. This process will be ongoing, and serve as a measure of use in perpetuity. Furthermore, after a six month period the website will ask visitors to participate in an online survey, which will inquire about the usefulness, information quality and understandability, and how the website has contributed to their interest in Pennsylvania historic studies.

Budget

The following estimates are based on publicly available information from vendors, as well as individual estimates given by vendors. Grant money will not pay for Librarian and Assistant labor, thus is excluded. Additionally, web space is being donated from the University and the University Libraries will be providing matching funds. Larsen Digital Services has agreed to offer a discount on their services, and will be upgrading the scan from 2000DPI to 4000DPI free of charge. Finally, physical space is already available for the storage of the 35mm slides within the Slide Library, and there will be no need for additional storage space for the collection. As you can see from the table below, the estimated total is approximately \$9,000, with \$4,500 of matching funds coming from the University Libraries.

Vendor	Product/Service	Cost	Total
Light Impressions	Gepe 35mm Slide Mounts, with Anti-Newton Glass (32 boxes)	\$1470.40	
	Gepe Slide	\$69.95	<i>\$1540.35</i>

	Mounting Press		
	Silver ¼" Polyester Film Tape (2 rolls)	\$35.90	<i>\$1576.25</i>
	Deluxe White Gloves (2 boxes)	\$47.90	<i>\$1624.15</i>
	1" StaticWisk	\$15.95	<i>\$1640.10</i>
	Pec-12, 4 oz.	\$14.95	<i>\$1655.05</i>
	Pec-Pad	\$9.95	<i>\$1665.00</i>
	Archival Laser Labels, 1 7/8" x 7/16"	\$27.90	<i>\$1692.90</i>
Unknown	Image Database Software	\$1500	<i>\$3192.90</i>
Larsen Digital Services	Slide Scanning Services	\$5,500	<i>\$8692.90</i>
Miscellaneous Fees	Shipping, handling, etc.	\$300	<i>\$8992.90</i>

Organization Information

The Slide Library at Penn State Harrisburg was initially developed by the Arts and Humanities Department in order to supplement departmental instruction and research. In 1999 the collection was handed over to the library so that the collection could be publicly available and properly maintained. The Slide Library provides access to visual resources in the area of art history, architecture, and American studies. The collections serve as an aid and supplement in original research projects and lectures.

Conclusion

Funds provided in the amount of \$4,500 by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Archives and Records Management Grant will be matched by the Pennsylvania State University Libraries. This money will go toward the archival preservation and digitization of the Frank Ferguson Collection of 35mm slides depicting various historical sites throughout Pennsylvania. Upon preservation this collection will be

available for public use in both the original film format and in digital form, accessible from a website.

This collection will greatly benefit those interested in Pennsylvanian history and culture, as it will serve as a research tool for those within Pennsylvania and beyond. This collection containing many historical sites associated with the PHMC, will serve as a permanent testament to the beauty and grandeur of Pennsylvania architecture.

Appendices

- Printed Application Summary
- Resumes from key project personnel
- Letter of support from the Arts and Humanities Department at Penn State Harrisburg
- Letter of support from the Center for Pennsylvania Culture Studies
- Copy of IRS Tax-Exempt Documentation of 501(c)(3) status
- Copy of 2006-2007 Strategic Plan

About Writing this Proposal

Guidelines from Funder

The guidelines for the PHMC Archives and Records Management Grants can be found online at http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/grants_archives_records_management.htm. In addition, the grant requires that you submit an online application. An exception can be made for those who are unable to access the equipment, and the paper version I used as a guide for writing the proposal can be found in a .pdf file on the website as well: http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/pdf/mpg_app.pdf.

Search Strategy

My initial search process started with the deciding what aspects of the collection were important, and what parts of the collection were applicable to areas beyond the curriculum of the college. Because the collection contains mainly images from the South-Central region of Pennsylvania, I felt that a Pennsylvania-based funder would be more interested in the project. Finally, I recognized that the interest likely extended beyond that of architecture, and into local art and history. I knew that there were grants available from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and was able to find a grant on their site that was aligned with the interest of the project. The Archives and Records Management Grants supports funding for "surveying, inventorying, preserving, arranging, describing and making available historical records relevant to Pennsylvania" which includes pictorial and machine-readable records such as slides.

Summary of Proposal Contents

The biggest tip I learned from the process was the importance of staying organized and focused. I found that the easiest way to start was to create an outline of what needed to be done, and to work from that outline. The outline provided an easy way to check to make sure that what I was addressing was in the appropriate section, so that information best placed in one portion of the proposal or addressed in another area was not repeated and was in the best place.

My proposal was an attempt to obtain funding from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) in order to preserve slides depicting Pennsylvania historic sites in both original and digital formats. After searching for some funders and significantly narrowing the scope of interest, I decided on the PHMC as a funder since access to these images could actually be useful to many involved in the PHMC as well.

The overall timeline for the project is 8 months, and the projects progress will be measured by circulation statistics and websites. The total budget will be approximately \$9,000, with \$4,500 of that being matching funds from the library. The majority of the budget goes toward digital preservation, in particular the conversion of the slides into digital images. The other large costs are the materials to preserve the 35mm slides in their original format and the estimated cost of software to create the online searchable database. The graph provides a visual summary:

