

NARRATIVE

1. Need and Rationale

Introduction

In 2008, an earthquake, several destructive tornadoes, and disastrous flooding struck Illinois. These events threatened important cultural and natural heritage collections throughout the state and highlighted how unprepared many institutions are to react in the face of such disasters. Previous surveys in 1987 and 2005 indicate that many collections-holding institutions in Illinois lack adequate environmental controls in storage and exhibition areas, have remedial (or lack altogether) emergency and/or disaster plans, and employ staff members who have not had formal training in collections preservation and disaster response, rendering these institutions unable to ensure preservation of the irreplaceable cultural and heritage resources. Currently, although isolated training is done through the Illinois Heritage Association, Consortia of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI), and State Archives, there is no centralized plan or network to ensure the long-term preservation of the heritage collections, respond to emergencies, provide easy access to training and other resources, and coordinate the preservation efforts of libraries, archives, and museums across the state. This grant lays the planning groundwork to establish the statewide Illinois Collections Preservation Plan and Network (ICPPN) and implement the recommendations of *The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America's Collections* (Heritage Preservation, 2005) to ensure the long-term preservation of heritage collections throughout Illinois.

Previous Surveys and Assessments in Illinois

Illinois has been a leader in cooperative preservation programming in past years. In 1980, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale received a Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) grant, which supported the completion of an early preservation needs assessment for Illinois libraries, leading to the foundation of the Office of Preservation at the Illinois State Library, and the publication of a proposed five-year plan focused on education and training, cooperative selection for preservation, development of treatment facilities, cooperative disaster response, and development of adequate support for preservation throughout the state (*The Preservation of Library and Archival Resources in Illinois*). Unfortunately, a statewide fiscal crisis resulted in the eventual closure of the Office of Preservation. Since that time, no statewide or regional preservation service has represented collecting institutions within Illinois.

Since the closing of the Office of Preservation, the State of Illinois has been shepherding preservation activities through the leadership of larger state and private institutions and committees in statewide programs, such as the CARLI Preservation Working Group. A significant step toward describing and quantifying library and other cultural institutions' preservation needs was accomplished through a 2005 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant distributed by the State Library to fund a statewide survey of preservation needs among cultural institutions. This survey solicited participation from 2,250 institutions in Illinois, including 624 Public libraries, 204 Academic libraries, 1,302 Museums/Historical institutions, and 102 County Clerks' offices. By the end of the survey period, 442 institutions had completed questionnaires for a response rate of 20 percent. The assessment found that there is a demand within the state for "training and basic published information" on a wide variety of preservation topics. Institution-level preservation surveys are also needed.

The preservation administrators and professionals in the state recognize that there is a lack of training, information, and basic awareness of preservation within the state's cultural heritage community. Preservation awareness education and institutional-level preservation surveys would help address the collections preservation needs in Illinois. Furthermore, these efforts would provide access to written guidelines for the preservation of collections. In addition to the growing interest in training and education, there is a strong interest in statewide services for book and paper conservation, digital imaging support, a central contact place

for preservation information, and state support for preservation grants to institutions (Clareson, Tom, Laurie Gimmell, and Amy Lytle, "Illinois Statewide Preservation Survey Project: 2005 Preservation Planning Survey Report," Planning and Education Unit, OCLC Digital Collection Services, August 1, 2005).

Training Institutions in Illinois

Museums, libraries, and archives have also been served over the years by two Illinois organizations offering training and services in preservation: the Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies and the Illinois Heritage Association. However, no centralized program fostering communication between institutions nor extensive statewide programming in our targeted areas of concern have yet been adequately addressed by either of these valuable resources in our state.

The Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies provides interdisciplinary and continuing education to meet the evolving training needs of individuals in the humanities who preserve cultural, historic, and artistic collections and properties. The Campbell Center is the only organization in the United States devoted entirely to providing an ongoing, regularly scheduled program of career training in collections care, historic preservation, and conservation. Currently, building on previous efforts to develop long-term sustainability for the Campbell Center, the new program director, Sharon Welton, is implementing innovative new ideas and will further refine and introduce new courses in the Collections Care Core Curriculum. Since the Collections Care Program began in 1990, the Campbell Center has served staff from over 1,000 institutions (museums, historic sites, national parks, libraries, universities, archives, private conservation labs and other businesses, such as packing companies and restoration companies) in all 50 states with approximately 225 organizations being from Illinois.

The Illinois Heritage Association perpetuates the history and heritage of Illinois by providing professional services to educational institutions, local government bodies, and nonprofit agencies. It researches and documents the history of Illinois, makes available the services of qualified personnel to assist with the needs of agencies entrusted with the perpetuation of Illinois history. It provides workshops, consultation services, newsletters and technical inserts, and access to a reference and circulating library and products and materials for preservation purposes.

Cooperative Preservation Planning

Informed by the findings of the Heritage Health Index (HHI) report, previous Illinois surveys, and recent planning discussions with key stakeholders in heritage preservation in Illinois for the development of this proposal, we seek an IMLS *Connecting to Collections Statewide Planning Grant* for Illinois to develop a planning framework that will establish the Illinois Collections Preservation Plan and Network to address the recommendations of the HHI. This planning effort will focus on four key areas:

- Providing tools and assessing needs for improving environmental conditions and collections care in the state (HHI: "provide safe conditions for collections")
- Disaster planning, training, and inter-institutional cooperative response (HHI recommendation: "develop an emergency plan" and "assign responsibility for collections care")
- Building public and professional preservation awareness, training, and programming (HHI: "raise public awareness about collections care" and "assign responsibility for collections care")
- Integrating existing preservation grants and projects for statewide perspective and benefit and future development (HHI: "marshal public and private support").

2. The Planning Process

The proposed project will include a planning session in the spring of 2009 in Springfield, Illinois for the entire partnership; four smaller, targeted working group meetings focused on each of the four key elements

identified above; and a wrap-up meeting. These sessions will be shared through video-conferencing at specified meeting locations (technology provided through the State Library) throughout the state to allow maximum attendance by interested organizations. During the preliminary meeting, targeted attendees and other interested parties will review the four key elements identified in our pre-grant planning meetings and help develop a survey that will be distributed to all state collections-holding institutions to seek input on the four initiatives. During this planning session, we will establish working groups and leadership for each targeted initiative. These working groups will then meet across the state to develop a plan and modules for a low-cost, sustainable collections preservation program for the state of Illinois and identify key areas of need for future fiscal development. Priority will be given to planning and implementation of those elements that can be most easily implemented and sustained through broad efforts of multiple people/organizations and not those that rely on individuals or on fiscal support by individual organizations. However, for each area, future areas of development that address significant needs but require more substantial development will be prioritized and considered for future development. A final meeting will be held to integrate recommendations from the other meetings and finalize planning for the ICPPN. Immediate outcomes from these meetings will include:

- an electronic and mail survey of institutional needs focusing specifically on the target areas identified in our planning process;
- assignment of institutions responsible for spearheading each of the four key areas of need;
- a statewide work plan and network (the ICPPN) developed by participating institutions for the coordinated implementation of low-cost, high-impact, and sustainable efforts to address the identified state needs.

Ongoing partnerships among participating institutions will be continued through the ICPPN Listserv and Web site (hosted through the Illinois State Library's *Web Junction*), periodic targeted regional meetings, and an annual meeting of all partners to evaluate progress towards outlined goals. Primary institutions partnering in this planning grant represent federal and state organizations, private and public collecting institutions, and public libraries and museums involved in the initial *Connecting to Collections Summit*, as well as preservation training organizations mentioned above.

The four key areas of preservation need identified for this project are:

a. Providing Tools and Assessing Needs for Improving Environmental Conditions and Collections Care in the State. Participants will establish the ICPPN, a central resource for providing institutions in the State of Illinois with the tools to properly assess the preservation needs of their collections and implement improvements once needs are identified. The focus of this resource will be a widely accessible model that empowers institutions to make simple improvements by offering small changes that are cost-effective, possibly through the development of a "Cost Effective Tool Kit for Preservation" workbook to be served on the Web site. Lastly, the participants will investigate the viability of offering training for preservation certification, resulting in the establishment of regional preservation leaders based loosely on the agreement of existing Illinois Association of Museums (IAM) regions, Illinois Regional Archives Depository (IRAD) regions, Regional Library Systems, and the Illinois Heritage Association, and encouraging informal partnerships between museums, libraries, and archives to best utilize available technology and training.

b. Disaster Planning, Training, and Inter-institutional Cooperative Response. The participants will establish the mechanism to provide disaster planning training and resources via both live workshops and Web-based training tools. This component may include live burn-recovery training provided through partnerships with the University of Illinois Fire Services Institute, as well as more traditional training on writing disaster plans and water disaster recovery training. This training program will enhance the existing requirement for

the State Library's *Per Capita* grant program, which requires disaster plans for grant awards, as well as the availability of grants for Disaster Recovery available through the State Library (<http://il.webjunction.org/do/Navigation?category=16287>), as well as The Campbell Center's course entitled Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. This is a four-day, intensive, hands-on course that covers every detail of each of these procedures. It also includes a mock water disaster. The Campbell Center instructors have expressed their willingness to offer extra sessions of this course if the need is expressed. The idea of "train the trainer" has also been discussed with the instructors. This type of course would train those enrolled in the course to go out and train others based on what they learned in the Campbell Center course. Access to resources will be provided through the ICPPN Listserv and Web site. For example, the Web site will provide links to statewide resources on emergency preparedness, such as the online version of "Severe Weather Preparedness" published by the State of Illinois and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency in 2008, as well as resources developed by the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH), the American Association of Museums (AAM), and the Society of American Archivists (SAA). In addition, through participation in workshops and training, the state will develop a cooperative disaster response network that will develop regional disaster recovery partnerships to assist with information sharing, staffing, supplies, and storage in the event of a disaster. Calls for help and coordination of efforts will be facilitated by the ICPPN Listserv and Web site.

c. Building Public and Professional Preservation Awareness, Training, and Programming. Participants will collect and evaluate existing materials for building public and professional preservation awareness, grants, training, and programming and create two clearinghouses of available resources targeting both public and professional audiences. These resources will also be served on the Web site, which will link to the "Connecting to Collections Bookshelf" and resources offered by national organizations such as AASLH, AAM, and SAA. The participants will investigate models for professional programs for preservation training, including use of a train-the-trainer model in the state for targeted training needs such as preservation storage of collections, basic low-cost collections care, disaster training, and grant proposal writing for preservation needs.

The plan will also investigate creative means to build public awareness of the importance of heritage collections and their preservation, possibly including public television or radio programming (already successful in various locations); the expansion of public preservation events such as the University of Illinois Preservation Emporium; the creation of a "Illinois Cultural Heritage Tour" through the Illinois Tourism Bureau; the development of an Illinois State "Preservation Day;" showing of the "Connecting to Collections" video in the lobbies of collections-holding institutions, as well as to their Boards and legislators; featuring the importance of collections and their preservation in museum, library, and archive magazines and newsletters; and leveraging of community service programs such as Kiwanis and Rotary to offer funding/assistance for community preservation efforts.

d. Integration of Existing Preservation Grants and Projects for Statewide Perspective and Benefit and Evaluation of Future Development Needs. The ICPPN will also provide a centralized source of available preservation information, including available grant opportunities to Illinois institutions, such as those through the IMLS, AAM, NEH, and NHPRC, as well as already-funded preservation programs and projects that can benefit preservation in the state, such as the AASLH's *Standards Project*, the IMLS-funded *Audio Visual Self Assessment Program* through the University of Illinois, and the AAM's *Museum Assessment and Accreditation Programs*. The Network Web site will provide links to federal grant programs that support conservation assessment and treatment, such as those offered by the IMLS.

Sustainability

It is critical to the success of this project that the participants build sustainability into any programs, and this consideration must be addressed and resolved during the planning and implementation stages of any statewide efforts. Therefore the partners will build in sustainability efforts during the planning stage of this project. We will seek to learn from our past mistakes in statewide preservation programming from the 1980s and develop a much needed program to serve a state that currently has no regional preservation program to service it.

Partners will also identify preservation needs in the state that can only be met with significant fiscal or personnel outlay and prioritize those needs based on broadest benefit to the state and future sustainability.

3. Project Resources: Budget and Personnel

All of the individuals noted, below, will contribute their time at no cost to the project. Office space, office equipment, and most office commodities will also be contributed for the project, as will space and videoconferencing for meetings. To supplement meeting and travel expenses, CARLI has also committed \$5,000 in matching funds should our application be successful. On behalf of the planning team, the Illinois State Museum Society requests \$40,000 to cover other project costs. A project manager will be hired to coordinate the planning meetings, summarize and present results of meetings, coordinate and implement the institutional survey, and draft the statewide preservation plan with assistance from the project participants noted below. Support is also requested for costs associated with the planning meetings and the implementation of the survey, listserv, and Web site.

The ICPPN Advisory Committee will be composed of at least 12 primary institutions or organizations with approximately 19 personnel carrying out the planning meetings and attending the Springfield planning sessions in person, including: Illinois State Museum (Bonnie Styles, Museum Director), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Jennifer Hain Teper, Head of Conservation, University Library, and Christa Deacy-Quinn, Collection Manager Spurlock Museum); Illinois State Library (Anne Craig, Director, as well as Pat Norris, Karen Egan, Alyce Scott, and Rosalie Pecoraro); Illinois State Archives (David Joens, Director); Illinois Heritage Association (Patricia Miller, Director); Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies (Sharon Welton, Director); Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (Kathryn Harris, Library Services Director and Bonnie Parr, Conservator); University of Chicago (Sherry Byrne, Preservation Librarian); Macomb Public Library (Dennis Danowski, Director); Chicago Public Library (Lesa Dowd, Conservator); Lakeview Museum (Kristan McKinsey, Vice President of Collections and Exhibitions, and Laura Gharst, Collections Manager), and Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (Julie Mosbo, Preservation Librarian, Morris Library). CARLI is represented by two current Preservation Working Group members listed above, Alyce Scott and Jennifer Hain Teper. Other institutions and organizations will be invited to participate in the targeted topic meetings and may become partners as the project progresses. David Oberb, President of the Illinois Association of Museums (IAM), has agreed to share information with Illinois museums through the IAM listserv and annual meeting.

The primary partners have agreed to work together to sustain the ICPPN Listserv and Web site beyond the life of this planning grant. This network will provide the first sustainable means of coordinating preservation information and efforts for the libraries, museums, archives, and other collections-holding institutions in Illinois. Partner institutions across the state will provide free access to the listserv and Web site to collections holding institutions in the state that do not have Internet access. The partners are also committed to seeking funding to implement the plan.