

**BRINGING COLLECTIONS TO LIGHT, PROJECT #RB-50072-09**  
**INTERIM REPORT TO THE**  
**NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDS COMMISSION**  
**FOR THE PERIOD**  
**MARCH 1, 2010-AUGUST 31, 2010**

**PROJECT STAFF**

Archives Assistants Megan Mummey and Laurel Rozema continued to work on the project both in their half-time NHPRC-funded positions, as well as in their permanent Briscoe Center-funded half-time positions. They spent 10% of their time assisting Registrar, Evan Hocker, with basic processing of incoming archival collections.

Evan Hocker continued to supervise Megan Mummey and Laurel Rozema, and accessioned all incoming archival collections. He oversaw the processing workflow, and ensured that all incoming collections received basic processing so that our backlog of hidden collections did not grow.

Stephanie Malmros managed the Collection Survey Database, and supervised Mr. Hocker and archives intern Chris Magee, as well as temporary project staff members Jessi Fishman and Sarah Powell. She worked closely with the project team to address issues that arose during the survey or during basic processing.

Linda Peterson, the Briscoe Center's Photographs Archivist, spent at least 25% of her time incorporating basic processing practices into the photo archives unit. Between March 1, 2010 and August 31, 2010 Linda and her graduate student intern, Emily Calkins, created 42 EAD records and 29 MARC records for existing "hidden" photograph collections.

Because the survey portion of the project took considerably longer than expected (discussed in March 31, 2010 Interim Report), the Briscoe Center hired two temporary employees to help the project get back on track in terms of the timeline. Archives Assistant, Jessi Fishman began work on March 29, 2010, and graduate student intern, Sarah Powell began work on April 1, 2010 and both worked on the project until the end of the fiscal year, August 31, 2010.

The Briscoe Center is fortunate to have access to the talents of graduate students in the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin. During the summer, recent graduate, Kathryn Brooks, input new EAD records on a volunteer basis. Beginning in September, additional graduate student volunteers will assist project staff with converting EAD records to MARC records using MarcEdit and creating new EAD records using legacy print finding aids.

**Objective 1. Timely submission of complete reports and three copies of grant products as specified in NHRPC guidelines and the grant notification letter.**

Second interim report will be submitted on or before September 30, 2010. This report covers grant activities for March 1, 2009-August 31, 2010.

**Objective 2. To manage new accessions more efficiently and prevent future backlog, prepare and make available A Guide for Donors to instruct donors of the Center's needs with regards to donated collections.**

We began by implementing a completely revised accession database system. We modified our accession database fields to include language and data relevant to MARC cataloging and EAD mark-up. The goal was to capture MARC and EAD-relevant data in the very first assessment of an incoming collection, thus streamlining the process and eliminating duplication of work. Thus far the system is working effectively. We have made some minor changes to the database fields and nomenclature based on feedback from our processing and cataloging staff. One of the great lessons of this project is the need to change and be flexible to meet the goal of leaving no collections behind.

In addition we made a strong commitment to creating basic MARC and EAD records for every new accession. To ensure compliance with this new mandate we altered our workflow so that new materials cannot physically be moved from the new accession receiving area to a permanent archives shelf location *until* basic MARC and EAD records are complete. By implementing this physical barrier we have had remarkable results. Since adopting our new workflow in September 2009 we have achieved an 89% completion rate for creating MARC and EAD records for new accessions. The remaining 11% represent collections with special considerations that are being held temporarily while we resolve issues relating to deeds of gift, appraisals, special donor requirements, or environmental quarantine for mold or insects. The strict space limitation in our receiving area is such that all new acquisitions, even those with special problems, will not languish for an extended period because the space simply will not accommodate them. Moreover, we are currently in the midst of moving several recently acquired collections to new off-site storage facilities, and they are scheduled to be checklisted and given MARC/EAD records in the next few months as they are prepped for their new storage locations. It should be re-emphasized that all collections falling within the 11% are physically situated in spaces that cannot serve as long-term storage areas, thus ensuring that they will move into the workflow in the coming months.

A graduate student, April Sullivan, will begin working on the Guide for Donors in September 2010 as a "capstone project." All School of Information masters candidates at the University of Texas at Austin complete a "capstone" project to integrate their professional education with the intellectual and institutional vocations toward which they are striving. April will meet regularly with Stephanie Malmros, Evan Hocker, and other Briscoe Center staff to learn our archival processes and workflows, and our needs with regard to Donor participation in the donation and description process. We anticipate

having her guide at the end of the fall semester. In the spring, we will invite feedback from other archivists before we finalize the Guide.

**Objective 3. Prioritize which 1500 of the estimated 4,500 hidden collections held by the Center will receive basic processing through the use of a collections survey and newly developed Preservation Assessment tool.**

### Survey

The collections survey was completed in early April 2010, and took seven months to complete, rather than the original estimate of three months. Ultimately, 8,927 individual collections were represented in the Collections Survey database, a number that was significantly higher than expected. Accordingly, the actual number of hidden Briscoe Center collections was higher as well. The survey revealed 6,650 hidden collections, 2,150 more than our original estimate of 4,500.

To create a prioritized list of 1500 collections to be addressed in this project, we excluded collections that being or will be addressed by staff dedicated to those through special project or grant funds. Eliminating those collections left a list of 4,200, which staff arranged according to the Total Research Value ranking assigned during the survey. Staff determined the research value using guidelines developed as part of the PACSCL (Philadelphia Consortium of Special Collections Libraries) Consortial Survey, which served as a model for ours. The first 1,500 collections, listed in rank order, were selected for basic processing. The Briscoe Center's executive director, Don Carleton, reviewed and approved the prioritized list.

### Preservation Assessment Tool

The Briscoe Center repurposed an existing ½ time position and created a new archives assistant position that will join Ms. Malmros and Mr. Hocker's team. The new hire begins October 1, and will have as her initial task the Preservation Assessment Tool. Ms. Gunn will transfer all previous research done and gathered for this tool.

**Objective 4. Prepare MARC records for the 1,500 collections and contribute these to OCLC and UT Libraries local online catalog.**

During this reporting period Laurel Rozema and Jessi Fishman collaborated to get MarcEdit downloaded, installed, and running. MarcEdit allows us to convert EAD records to MARC records in batches, which saves an enormous amount of time that would otherwise be lost re-typing the same information into a different format. Ms. Rozema created an XSLT stylesheet specific to the Briscoe Center to be used in the conversion process, and she created a document with step-by-step instructions for converting files from EAD to MARC using MarcEdit, and then uploading to and editing in OCLC Connexion.

Because we will be able to quickly and efficiently convert EAD records to MARC in batches, the bulk of the project staff's efforts this reporting period were focused on the creation of collection-level EAD records. Even so, project staff created 93 new MARC records this reporting period. This raises the total number of MARC records created since the project's inception on September 1, 2009 to 254.

**Objective 5. Prepare EAD records for the 1,500 processed collections and contribute these to the Texas Archival Resources Online (TARO).**

Project staff created 459 EAD records during this reporting period. In order to promote consistency among the records created, we instituted a peer review process and project staff reviewed and edited each other's records, with a final review by Stephanie Malmros. The temporary addition of student assistant Sarah Powell and archives assistant Jessi Fishman, helped enormously to make up for the extra time spent completing the collection survey and put the project back on track in terms of EAD and MARC record creation. The total number of EAD records created since the project's inception on September 1, 2009 is 589. To meet the project objectives, we will create 76 new EAD records per month between September 2010 and August 2011. As mentioned above, the Briscoe Center has hired a new, permanent half-time Archives Assistant, who, in addition to working on the preservation assessment tool, will contribute a minimum of 10% of her time to this project.

**Objective 6. Promote the use of the project's method by posting the Guide for Donors, the grant's interim narrative and other relevant reports and updates on the Center's website.**

Stephanie Malmros worked with the Briscoe Center's website administrator to create a webpage devoted to the "History Revealed: Bringing Collections to Light at the Briscoe Center for American History" project. The website includes a general description of the project and a listing of newly uncovered collections. Although the page is live, it is not completed; we will add links to the EAD finding aids and will revise the design and functionality of the page to make the collection titles easier to read. The webpage may be accessed at <http://www.cah.utexas.edu/projects/nhprc/index.php>

**Objective 7. Promote the availability of the collections through an announcement on the Center's website, press release in a newsletter, at least two presentations made to a local community organizations, professional groups, or schools, and messages posted to at least three list-servs.**

Stephanie Malmros is currently working on session proposals for presentations at the Society of American Archivists annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois in August 2011, and at the Society of Southwest Archivists annual meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas in May 2011.

Respectfully submitted by Brenda Gunn, Associate Director