

## PROGRESS REPORT 23 OCTOBER 2006 MEETING

### Background

On 23 October 2006, the partners in the Great Rivers Cultural Heritage Network (GRCHN) project, funded by the Bush Foundation, met at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul. The primary goals were: to review the project work plan and expectations; to demonstrate the potential of the technology; and to identify issues and questions we need to address in the course of the project. A copy of the agenda and a list of issues distributed before the meeting are attached as an appendix to this report.

### Participants

Michael Fox, Minnesota Historical Society (MHS); Tim Glines, MHS; David Grabitske, MHS; Bob Horton, MHS; Marj Kelly, MHS; Ben Leonard, Nicollet County Historical Society; Todd Mahon, Anoka County Historical Society; Gerald Newborg, State Archivist of North Dakota; Jessica Potter, Blue Earth County Historical Society; Chelle Somsen, State Archivist of South Dakota; Sherry Sweetman, Olmsted County Historical Society; Irene van Bavel, MHS

### Discussion

During the meeting, a wide variety of issues came up for discussion. For the purposes of this report, those are loosely categorized under possible content; technology; and education/outreach. A common concern, cutting across all categories, was copyright and intellectual property – everyone moving into the digital world has to keep that in mind. Although all the issues raised will remain under consideration, during the meeting, they were analyzed and detailed as “action items.” Those are the priorities for the short term.

#### Possible content

- *Minnesota History* – the journals are now being digitized. The partners may have similar resources.
- geographic data
- common calendar of events
- institutional records (e.g., state hospitals)
- images, including portraits, photos of people
- historical markers, perhaps with a web mapping service
- genealogical resources: probate records, naturalizations, marriages

#### Technology

- “scrapbook” function
- e-commerce is a highly desirable function, but there are questions about service commitments, quality control, directing orders to the appropriate entity, common or standard pricing

## Great Rivers Cultural Heritage Network Project

- PastPerfect – it would be helpful to know who uses it, how, with which functions, for internal or external audiences, how to evaluate the data in different installations etc.
- customization and personalization functions – will these require the use of cookies?
- use of “neutral” web site – i.e., GRCHN rather than MHS

### Education/outreach

- K12 teachers are an important audience, esp. those involved with History Day
- standards and guidelines are necessary – metadata, data formats, usable content etc.
- work with MHS Outreach and Field Services – *Interpreter* articles, 2008 workshops

### Action items

1. Write and distribute meeting and progress report – MHS staff. *November 2006*
2. Register GRCHN etc. domain names – MHS staff. *December 2006*
3. Develop project web site – MHS staff will develop this to facilitate communication and sharing information among the partners. *December 2006*
4. Schedule site visits to North and South Dakota – the purpose is to meet with the constituencies of the two state archives, promote the project, demonstrate the technology, answer questions and explore potential sources of digital content. MHS staff will work with Somsen and Newborg to set the meetings up for the summer of 2007. *March 2007*
5. Implement Autonomy search engine – MHS staff will install and test this application with MHS databases through the spring of 2007. *April 2007*
6. Identify relevant standards for digital content and metadata – MHS staff will compile draft guidelines for review by the partners based on their experience implementing the Autonomy search engine and their analysis of PastPerfect. *Summer 2007*
7. Develop survey form for inventories of existing digital content – MHS staff will modify an internal form for review by the partners. This will be based on the standards and guidelines for digital content and metadata. *Summer 2007*
8. Review regional web sites for digital content currently online – collaborative, based on work initiated by Ben Leonard. *Ongoing*
9. Develop and submit grant proposals for the creation of additional digital content – MHS staff to initiate: a proposal for the digitization of Minnesota newspapers was sent to the NEH on 1 November; one for the digitization of immigrant oral histories, with curriculum and public program components, will go to the IMLS on 1 February 2007. *Ongoing*

**APPENDIX**

**Agenda  
23 October Meeting**

Agenda  
Deluxe 1

9	Coffee, continental breakfast
9.15	Introductions, project overview
10	Work plan review
10.45	Break
11	Technology demo
12	Lunch
1	Work flow diagrams
1.45	Identifying issues to address and questions to answer
3	Break
3.15	Review, summary, action items
4	Meeting ends

**Issues/questions**  
**23 October Meeting**

How do we gauge a repository's capacity or readiness to join GRCHN?

Who has digital content readily available? online?

content, application, format, structure, metadata

Who has an inventory of content in digital form?

What are our audiences?

What are their needs and expectations?

What content will appeal to them?

What additional functionality will be useful? E.g., e-commerce?

Future plans? What standards do we need to ensure ready use of content created in the future?

PastPerfect

who is using it?

any content online? hosted by PastPerfect

What education do we need?

What other types of support will be helpful? Outreach? grants?