



THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARCHIVIST

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Fall Issue

CSU Libraries' Water Resources Archive acquires 100th collection

Irrigation ditches lace the lands of Colorado, transporting water required for raising crops and tying mountains to plains, rural areas to urban. The Water Resources Archive at the Colorado State University (CSU) Libraries preserves the history of these fundamental features of the state's heritage and landscape and celebrated the receipt of its 100th collection of significant documents in August.

The North Poudre Irrigation Company (NPIC), one of the largest irrigation companies in northern Colorado, has donated its historical records to the Water Resources Archive. Among NPIC's 73 boxes, 10 ledgers, and approximately 1,000 large maps, plans and aerial photos reside details of the company's 1901 origins and its development of nearly two dozen storage reservoirs and 200 miles of ditches.

"This is now the largest archival collection documenting an irrigation company in the state," said archivist Patty Rettig. The next largest, also at the Water Resources Archive, is from the opposite corner of Colorado and documents the Montezuma Valley Irrigation Company.

After Archives staff clean the materials of dust and mold, organize and inventory them, the collection will be accessible to the public.

"We appreciate the Archive's

professionalism and help with this process and project," said Scott Hummer, NPIC general manager, who facilitated the donation.

The Archive's 99th collection, the Papers of Loretta Lohman, is the first collection in the repository to document the work of a woman in water. Dr. Lohman's lifetime of research on Western water issues focused on the economic effects of water reuse, salinity, federal reclamation projects, and energy use.

Other collections in the Water Resources Archive include the Papers of Delph E. Carpenter and Family, the Ralph L. Parshall Collection, and the Records of Wright Water Engineers, respectively documenting the development of interstate river compacts, flumes and early irrigation practices, and investigations of water rights related to engineering projects.

"By rescuing historical documents from inadequate, inaccessible storage, we can provide access to a virtual time machine to see how our society developed," said Rettig.

The Water Resources Archive, which opened in 2001 to collect, preserve, and promote the unique documents that capture Colorado's water history, has grown substantially over the last 14 years. Its collections are now so extensive they would extend over a half mile if all the boxes were placed end to end.

The Archive broadly collects documentation of water across the state of Colorado, and even beyond. Collections have come from as far away as California and Nebraska. Donors benefit from having collections inventoried

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Notes from the President



If you missed the SRMA fall meeting October 2 in Estes Park, you really did miss out! We had a wonderful time at the Estes Park Museum, with presentations in the morning by our local members about their efforts at digital preservation, linked data and working across departments and the perspectives of students. Several of us are pursuing the Digital Archives Specialist Certification, and the afternoon webinar was a step along that path.

Those of us who journeyed to the Rocky Mountain National Park curation facility were treated to an excellent and enthusiastic tour by Kelly Cahill. There was a GIANT elk, almost bigger than my CR-V near the curation facility when we pulled up, and luckily he did not mistake me for another elk.

Our first after-work meetup at Black Sky Brewing was also a success, we were small (6) but mighty! Watch the mailing list for more SRMA happy-hour meetups if you are in the

Denver area (Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Ft. Collins, and Laramie are encouraged to organize groups as well!)

The SRMA board is working on a plan to bring a complete set of DAS workshops to the Colorado/Wyoming area. More information will be forthcoming when we have it via the email list.

Welcome to Dr. Mary Elizabeth Ruwell as our new Membership Chair! Mary Elizabeth is the Academy Archivist at the Air Force Academy, has been very involved in both SAA and the Academy of Certified Archivists, and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the board.

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Membership Information & Benefits

SRMA membership is drawn from regular and volunteer staff of archives, historical societies, museums, businesses, government agencies, libraries, colleges and universities, religious institutions and other persons who are concerned with the identification and care of information that documents the history of our region. Individual membership is open to any interested person. Institutional memberships are welcome and encouraged.

SRMA membership facilitates the exchange of archival knowledge and assistance. It advances the interests of individual archivists and of the archival profession. Members automatically receive the SRMA newsletter, membership directory, regional archives directory, and informational materials. The Society also has an editorial board for the publication of occasional papers. We invite you to complete the membership application form located on the SRMA website to enhance your personal career development and to further the cause of the archival profession in the Rocky Mountain region.

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and potentially digitized. The public benefits from accessibility for general use, such as scholastic studies, legal cases, filmmaking, or family genealogy.

The collections are accessible in Suite 202 of Morgan Library on the CSU campus in Fort Collins from 8:30-4:30, Monday through Friday. Also, about 5 percent of the total holdings are digitally available online.

For more information, visit the Archive's website (<http://lib.colostate.edu/water/>) or call 970-491-1844. ■



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Collection spotlight: William Smith Collection at the Aurora History Museum

By Nick Richie
Student

One of the most interesting photograph collections I have had the pleasure of scanning is the William Smith Collection at the Aurora History Museum.

William Smith was born on April 24, 1860. Sponsored by Lord James Barclay, he sailed from Liverpool on October 29, 1878 and arrived in Denver a few weeks later. From there, he married Ann Gunson Smith.

They had 4 children: William Smith Jr., Margaret Robina Smith, Robert Gunson Smith, and James Barclay Smith. Smith settled his Aurora, Colorado farm in 1882 near 6th Avenue and Peoria Street and constructed the house at 412 Oswego Court in 1910. After his wife died in January 1908, Smith married her widowed sister Rachel Gunson Canter Smith the following year. Smith died on April, 20, 1946.

William Smith was a member of the local Board of Education for 50 years. The town named the first high school in Aurora after him in 1931 as a result of his contributions towards creating the Aurora Public School system. William Smith High School is now located near 6th Avenue and Airport Boulevard, with the site of the former high school at 10100 E. 13th Avenue now being used as Aurora West College Preparatory Academy.



William Smith. (Courtesy Aurora History Museum)



William Smith house. (Courtesy Aurora History Museum)

News & Announcements

Informal gathering of archivists to meet in December

A small group of archivists in the Denver area are planning on starting more frequent, informal gatherings to better get acquainted with their colleagues outside of workshops and conferences.

Craig Haggitt, Senior Catalog Librarian in the Western History/Genealogy Department sent notice to the SRMA email list that these planned monthly meetings will convene at Black Sky Brewery the second Thursday of each month. The first meetup is scheduled for December 10. No RSVP is necessary.

Black Sky Brewing is located at 490 Santa Fe Drive, Denver, 80204.

In the Media

Denver Museum of Nature and Science Image Archivist René O'Connell and **CinemaLab's Robert David** were interviewed by Nathan Heffel of Colorado Matters on Colorado Public Radio in advance of a screening of "Desert Islands," a film produced by former museum director Alfred M. Bailey and preserved at the DMNS archives. The two discussed their collaboration, film preservation, the history of the film, and Bailey himself. The interview can be found at www.cpr.org.

University of Denver historian Steve Fisher was interviewed by KUSA-TV 9NEWS in Denver about an artist's project to reproduce photographs taken by Edward

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Curtis. The project relied on Curtis photographs held by the university's archives. The story can be found at www.9news.com.

Denver Public Library Acquisitions Librarian Jamie Seemiller was interviewed by Nathan Heffel of Colorado Matters on Colorado Public Radio about digital preservation. The spot was prompted by a recent *Atlantic* article about the ephemeral nature of the web, and the demise of the *Rocky Mountain News* in particular. The interview can be accessed at www.cpr.org.

Were you or your institution spotlighted in the media? Please be sure to drop us a line at editor@srmarchivists.org to let us know!

Have you renewed?

Please consider renewing your membership in the Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists for 2015! Membership remains \$10 for students, \$15 for individuals, and \$30 for organizations. Renew now so you don't miss out on anything!