

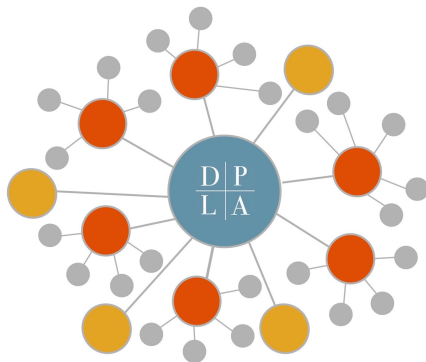
# The Rocky Mountain ARCHIVIST

## Colorado-Wyoming Service Hub of the Digital Public Library of America

*By Leigh Jeremias*

Representatives from Colorado and Wyoming cultural heritage organizations are currently planning the creation of a Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) service hub. These service hubs are state, regional, or other collaborations that host and/or bring together digital objects from institutions within their respective communities. Planning for the service hub is being organized by the Colorado State Library. The planning and working groups include library, museum and archives professional from a variety of institutions types and geographic locations. With these varied perspectives we

hope to create a service hub model that works for all of our diverse institutions. It is our hope that every institution in Colorado and Wyoming will have the opportunity to participate in the DPLA.



*Image courtesy of the Colorado State Library*

### What is the DPLA?

The DPLA brings together (aggregates) descriptive information about collection material from libraries, archives, and museums, and makes it freely available to the world while at the same time directing that traffic back

to the owning institution. Currently this national online portal has:

- 14 million + collections resources from libraries, archives and museums
- 16 service hubs (soon to be 25) and 14 content hubs that include 2,057 institutional partners from across the United States

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## What the DPLA can do for your collections

- Sharing your collection information with DPLA gives you the ability to:
- Place your institution on the same national playing field as others
- Increase traffic to your collections and therefore your institution
- Create collection-based educational sets
- Develop online exhibits
- Build a community around individual collections
- Establish a platform for underrepresented groups

## Colorado-Wyoming Service Hub Planning

Planning for the service hub began in earnest in May 2016 when the Digital Collections Planning Group (DCPG) met for the first time. Since then, technology and metadata working groups were formed to create and prototype the hub's dark aggregator and to explore and eventually create metadata standards for the hub. All three groups came together in late September to meet with staff from the DPLA, and work out a strategy for moving forward.

The group discussed the proposed [Colorado-Wyoming hub plan](#). This plan outlines the anticipated responsibilities of the Colorado State Library, the partner organizations and the continued work of the initial planning groups and eventual governance group. We propose to do the hub work in three initial phases. Phase one will include six organizations that will help determine hub processes, workflows and will provide the initial feed to DPLA. The hub will add more partners in phases two and three. During the initial phases of the hub we will grow our service hub model, which is made up of Content Hubs, institutions that will provide content and hub participation support to other

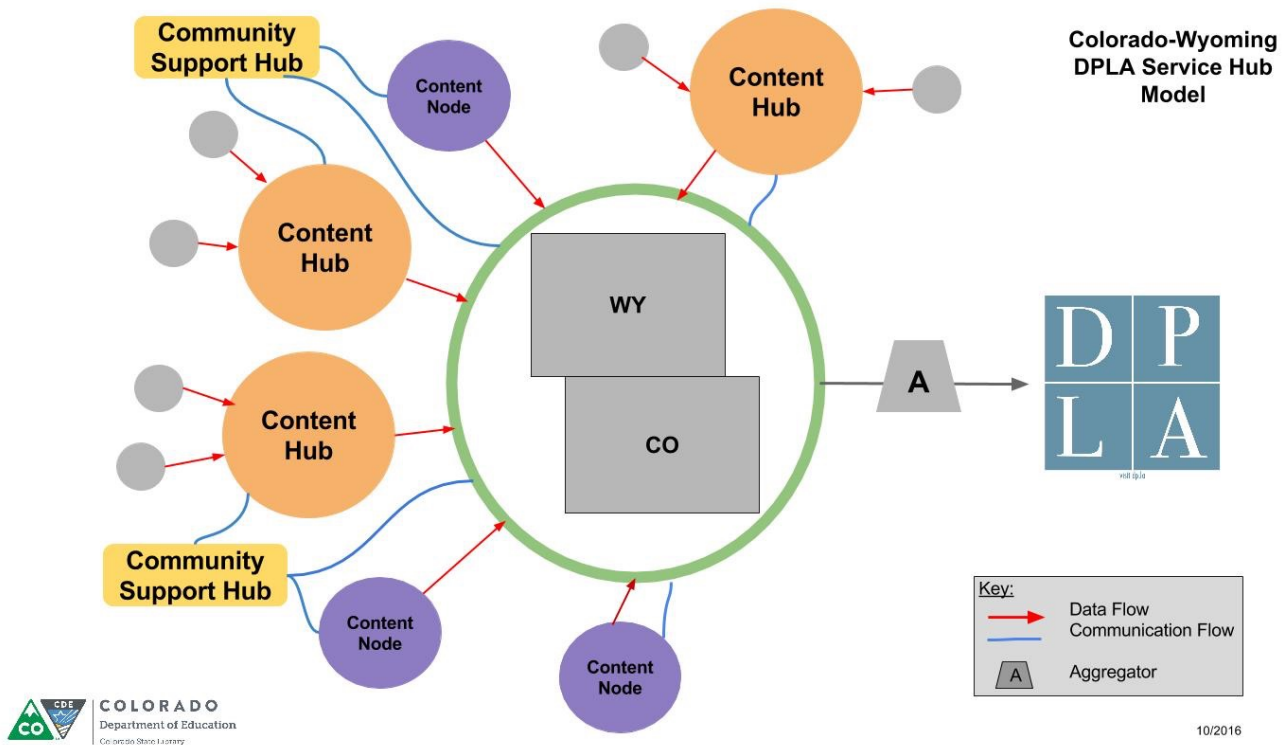
### Editor's Note:

Based on the survey results, we'll be working to add more special collection highlights from around Colorado and Wyoming. If you have one you'd like to learn more about, or would like to write up something about one of your own collections, send me an email and we can work out some details. In the Spring issue we'll be giving you more details on the Spring Meeting!

We always strive to include feature articles in each issue — this issue highlighting the Colorado State Library's untiring efforts to bring Colorado and Wyoming cultural memory institutions into the DPLA.

*Craig Haggit*  
*SRMA Newsletter Editor*  
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institutions; Community Support Hubs, organizations that will provide hub outreach to the institutions they represent; and Content Nodes, institutions that will only supply content to the hub.



The DPLA hub application will be written and submitted prior to January 1. If you have any questions about or would like to participate in the [Colorado-Wyoming DPLA Service Hub initiative](http://www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org) we would love to hear from you. Please contact me, Leigh Jeremias, at [ljeremias@coloradovirtuallibrary.org](mailto:ljeremias@coloradovirtuallibrary.org). For more information about our progress please visit our planning page at [www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org](http://www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org).



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<http://www.cafepress.com/srma>**



## Note from the President

Thank you to Adam Speirs and Jessie de la Cruz for a fantastic fall conference! Based on the survey, it was a resounding success. I believe we had record or near record turnout for a fall meeting. Thanks also to all of our presenters who braved the new Pecha Kucha format. If you have any further feedback, contact emails for the Program Coordinator and Member-at-Large can be found on the SRMA website.

About 28% of you responded to the membership survey which in the world of surveys is a good turnout. Thank you for participating and letting us know your thoughts about the direction and focus of SRMA. Everyone was comfortable with a dues increase of some degree. 75% of respondents have participated in one or more of the DAS classes. About 40% are pursuing various archival certifications.

Digital and traditional archival care and handling are of equal interest for future conferences or workshops. The Denver area meet-up is a challenge for most of you to attend. 80% of respondents want to see more articles about member collections in the newsletter followed by feature articles (67%), advice column (60%), and job postings (45%). The Journal of Western Archives and the SRMA web site are not frequently visited. Networking, conferences, and continuing education are all equally valued SRMA opportunities with continuing education leading the way (88%) for what you want to see more of.

The board is evaluating these responses as we review the bylaws to determine what changes or updates need to be made. Thanks to all who participated. Do plan to attend the spring meeting so that we will have a quorum at the business meeting to vote on any updates to the bylaws. Changes will be sent via the email list for review prior to the meeting.

Also, ahead of the spring meeting, we will be looking to elect new members to the board. This is your chance to beef up that resume, make your ideas and voice heard, and to win friends and influence people! There will be two appointed positions and four elected positions. Education Coordinator and Outreach Coordinator are non-voting positions appointed by the board. Nominate yourself or a friend by emailing any board members. Vice President, Treasurer, Member at Large, and Preservation are all voting members. Feel free to contact any current or past board members if you have any questions about any of these positions.

See you at the spring conference!

*Allaina Wallace*



# Archives as Muse

**Presented by the  
Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists**

**RFP for  
ARCHIVES AS MUSE PROGRAM**

## *PROGRAM OVERVIEW*

Calling all archives. The Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists aims to develop a national public program titled: Archives as Muse that will attract, inspire, and serve regional creatives and guide them as they explore archival collections.

This program aims to engage artists with archives in the hope that artists will create a one-of-a-kind piece that will be performed or displayed, and discussed, at a public arts venue. The event will take place next October 2017 to correlate with National Archives Month.

This program will take a multi-stepped approach and will begin by identifying archives participants. The archives participants will be part of an Archives as Muse Directory. The directory will be given to artists so that they can identify particular collections of interest. The directory will also detail the role of archives and archivists, how to do research in an archives, how to make an appointment, and will provide an abstract, images and contact information for our participating archives.

Using the Archives as Muse Directory, SRMA will send a call for proposals to artists and creatives to participate in the Archives as Muse program. Artists who wish to contend for a spot in the program will visit an archive and--inspired by a collection or item - submit an artist statement, 3-5 images, writings or photographs that demonstrate past work, and a proposal of the work and the archive to be explored. The public program will be held at 6pm on October 26th, 2017, at the McNichols building.

The proposals will be vetted by a juror team of archivists, art curators, writers, and performers. All participating artists, whether selected for the program or not, will be given a free ticket to the public program. The juror team will only be choosing 6-7 artists to present work at the public program.

At the public program, artists who have been selected to present their work will display or perform it during the 1 ½ to 2-hour event (with a fifteen-minute intermission). The public program will also consist of a side-by-side conversation with the artist and the archivist of the collection that inspired



the artist; the two will talk about the process of working together. Furthermore, each of these artists will be awarded a \$500 honorarium for their time and contribution.

The Archives as Muse program is developed with the hope that it can provide an engaging platform for archivists and artists to work together and that these conversations will contribute to a larger dialogue about archives and the creative process.

### *What Does it Mean to be an Archives Participant?*

To be an archives participant for this program, please register with the Archives as Muse Program Director to internally advertise that your archive or collection is open for this research. Please also sign up to get the word out in the promotion of this program. Any social media that you can create to promote both your involvement with artists and the October public program is appreciated.

To be included as participating archives, please submit the following by February 13th at 5:00 pm:

- Name of Archive and Institution, address and Website address
- 150-word description of your archives
- 3-5 images (high res) of archival materials and appropriate credits if needed
- Contact information of the Archivist that would be working directly with researchers/artists
- An institutional logo

Please direct questions and materials to

Jessie de la Cruz  
Archives as Muse 2017, Program Director  
Jdelacruz@clyffordstillmuseum.org  
720.354.488

### **SRMA Membership Information**

SRMA membership is drawn from regular and volunteer staff at 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. Basic membership is only \$15, and you can pay online. And recruit some colleagues to join too!

Full information can be found on our web site at:  
<http://www.srmarchivists.org/about-us/membership/>

## SRMA Professional Education Opportunities

*by Adam Speirs, SRMA Program Director*

Hello SRMA!

2016 saw a substantial focus on regional professional education opportunities, and SRMA will be continuing this path in 2017.

In 2016, we were able to host five onsite Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) certificate classes, produced by the Society of American Archivists, thanks to the efforts of staff at Auraria Library, Denver Public Library, and University of Northern Colorado Libraries, and through a special technical grant from the Colorado Historical Records Advisory Board, which funded discounted registration costs and three scholarships for membership. Without these institutional partnerships, none of SRMA's efforts could have come to fruition, and we all owe a great deal of thanks for the spirit of collaboration we have here in Colorado and Wyoming.

We were also able to work with the Society of American Archivists Education Program staff to provide free virtual attendance to seven DAS webinars, reaching over 25 institutions across Colorado and Wyoming. In November, Denver Water hosted six SRMA members for the DAS comprehensive exam, and we look forward to another round on February 24, at Denver Public Library. Our regional expertise in the digital arena is being sharply honed.

In 2017, we have two DAS classes lined up so far, Building Advocacy and Support for Digital Archives, on April 14, and Preserving Digital Archives, on May 16, both to be held at the Community First Foundation meeting spaces in Arvada, CO. A huge thank you to Member-at-Large, Jessie de la Cruz for securing this location free of charge to SRMA. You can find out more about these classes and register to attend at: <http://saa.archivists.org/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=GetEvents>

We are looking at further opportunities: bringing SAA's Arrangement and Description classes to the region, as well as looking to our membership. We have a wealth of expertise in this region that could be brought to bear through the local production of high quality webinars available to membership at any time. A series of workshops could easily be put together to keep our region at the cutting edge of changes to our professional environment, while maintaining and developing the skills that have been in the profession since that first cuneiform tablet was commanded to be stored away for later retrieval. And we can compensate our local experts; nothing in this world is free.

With this renewed focus on professional education, the SRMA board is also looking at the prospect of adding an Education Coordinator to our ranks in 2017. If this sounds like an opportunity you would be interested in pursuing, please keep a weather eye for announcements as things progress.

And thank you all, for your continued interest in the profession and the discipline. Without you, where would we be?

### To keep us grounded... or in flight?

At the 2016 Fall Meeting, we tried our hand at PechaKucha, a rapid-fire presentation format (20 minutes / 20 slides). One of those talks, by poet Elyssa Lewis, is presented below. In a field filled with non-stop projects and ever-looming deadlines, it is good to take a step back to take in the Big Picture. thanks Elyssa! — *Editor*

## “The Myth of Permanence”

By Elyssa Lewis

Cyber-technology has perpetuated the myth of permanence within an inherently fleeting existence. Even before the Internet became what it is today, obsessions with immutability have informed linear, cause-and-effect narratives of profit-driven human “progress.” The result is widespread dissociation and a distorted relationship to the global climate crisis. Already profoundly aware of history’s subjective nature, archivists have a unique and important position along the tightrope of preservation and decay. To take this instinct one step further, it is essential to embrace unknowability, radical interconnectedness, and non-possessive reverence for the world’s ephemerality. Fate is no constant thing.

In a world of global climate crisis, our conceptions of “storage” and “saving” are largely shaped by the Internet. Our effortless ability to “save” something with the click of a button, then revisit it an infinite number of times, plants within us a dangerous idea of permanence within a radically finite existence. Inspired by inherent interconnectivity within the framework of non-linear narrative, I wish to speak to you poetically about how technology can mask the world’s ephemerality and feed a destructive possessiveness.

Being human in a time of exponential technological “progress,” we find ourselves suddenly harboring strange new intuitions; We feel a certain fatefulness with every keystroke we make. Our every move, our every sound is potentially observed by this technology we both crave and beneath whose eye we cringe. Yet, we persevere. As archivists, you know how technology is extremely useful, with many benefits, and growing more helpful by the day. What we don’t consciously observe, is our own instinct evolving along this same trajectory. We know now that “deleting” something is never as simple as that. Files are “recoverable,” “backed up,” or floating within a seemingly permanent limbo called “the cloud.” It seems we can’t get rid of anything. The cyber record of our lives follows us forever, existing and not existing, simultaneously seen and un-seen within a liminal space that doesn’t seem to comply with the natural rules of the world. We have found a new home in our homepage, concurrently comforting and disturbing. This is one perspective of cyber-space.

Without denying the usefulness of virtually preserving our memories, our stories, our thoughts, our identities, I believe that the physical preservation of these narratives is important on many levels. Technology is amazing, and it is neutral. Like any tool, its power is within our hands, our acknowledgement of subjectivity, our individual empowerment. In order to wield this power with wisdom, it’s essential to be in close touch with the organic rhythms and processes that govern life and death, birth and decay, creation and destruction. Archivists have a unique position on this strange tightrope. You must embrace decay to understand preservation. You must acutely



acknowledge that informational gaps are far greater than the official record. Unlike many, you know that there is no objective history; that all is perspective. You are in close contact with remnants of human memory every day. Yet, for the average North American, there are so many aspects of our lives from which institutional structures forbid our participation. For instance, long gone are the days when we bathe, dress, and bury our own people after they've died. Profit-peddlers disguised as industry professionals take the whole process out of our hands and then stuff our loved ones full of chemicals, enabling us one last look: one last memory to save. And there is nothing wrong with saving memories. But, in the same breath, we must acknowledge that everything changes. That the past, like the future, is a realm of possibility, rather than fact. Shiny pine boxes can't keep our bodies from returning to anything but human life, and our social media ghosts persist after we're gone, with every comment, every picture, every preference intact. Yet, our own perspectives are fluid in nature, ever-informed by our constantly evolving life experience, where no single cause leads to no single effect.

In cyberland's over saturation of information and identity, it's easy to forget that if you look long enough ahead, everything you ever did will become a primordial mass of unrecognizable energy again; It will be anything but human. A poet I love once said, "clear and sweet is my Soul, / and clear and sweet is all that is not my Soul." It's vital to connect our psyches to our own radical finitude and to acknowledge our limited human perspective, a perspective that's no less subjective when set in ones and ohs. Writing a linear narrative of our own existence within the primarily non-physical realm of the Internet can be profoundly dissociating, and dissociation does much damage to ourselves and to the planet. As archivists, you know better than most the profound subjectivity of historical memory. Unfortunately, most of the policy-makers, the Big Money Deciders, the ones with the institutional power, are enslaved to the capitalist myth of the profit-driven, linear cause-and-effect model, propagating dangerous ideas about ownership and permanence.

But like a pipeline through a graveyard, these linear narratives are not as deep and secured within our cultural consciousness as they may seem. There is always more memory to explore. More perspectives. More voices. I applaud those brave enough to embrace unknowability, radical interconnectedness, and a non-possessive reverence for the world's fleetingness.

We are not floating in this life with no anchor, no home. To finish, I'd like to quote Gaston Bachelard from his work *The Poetics of Space*, where he illustrates a foundational connectedness with the logic of a transitory dreamstate:

"Sometimes the house of the future is better built, lighter and larger than all the houses of the past, so that the image of the dream house is opposed to that of the childhood home. Late in life, with indomitable courage, we continue to say that we are going to do what we have not yet done: we are going to build a house. This dream house may be merely a dream of ownership, the embodiment of everything that is considered convenient, comfortable, healthy, sound, desirable, by other people. It must therefore satisfy both pride and reason, two irreconcilable terms...Maybe it is a good thing for us to keep a few dreams of a house that we shall live in later, always later, so much later, in fact, that we shall not have time to achieve it. For a house that was final, one that stood in symmetrical relation to the house we were born in, would lead to thoughts—serious, sad thoughts—and not to dreams. It is better to live in a state of impermanence than in one of finality." (p 61)

## News You Might Have Missed

Don't have time to catch all the news? Who does?? Here's a short summary of some archive-related happenings

### Catalyst Fund

[more info](#)

"The Catalyst Fund is a program of the Leaders Circle and LYRASIS, and will distribute \$100,000 in 2017 to foster new ideas, kickstart pilot projects and provide seed funding for new technologies and programs at the local level."—LYRASIS

### Journal of Western Archives

[current issue](#)

*The Journal of Western Archives is supported in part through SRMA funding, and offers open access to peer-reviewed articles of interest to Western archives and manuscript repositories. According to the JWA website, "Archivists in the western United States face a unique set of challenges related to the geography of the West, as well as its recent history. The Journal of Western Archives provides a venue where archivists working in the West can highlight their unique contributions to the archival profession"—JWA*

### Northeast Document Conservation Center

[2017 schedule](#)

*Looking for some online or onsite training to help you help your researchers? NEDCC is well-known for providing lots of both. Mix of fee-based and free sessions.*

### 2017 Society of American Archivists Diversity Award

[more info](#)

*Deadline for submission is February 28, 2017. "This award recognizes an individual, group, or institution for outstanding contributions in advancing diversity within the archives profession, SAA, or the archival record. Nominees will have demonstrated significant achievement in the form of activism, education, outreach, publication, service, or other initiatives in the archives field."—SAA*