
MONTANA MEMORY PROJECT

WHERE MONTANA'S RICH PAST MEETS ITS PEOPLE



Frequently Asked Questions

What is it?

The Montana Memory Project (MMP) is a statewide project designed to provide access to digital collections of items relating to Montana's cultural heritage and government. It is sponsored by the Montana State Library and the Montana Historical Society. The Montana Memory Project is an expansive, online resource with a wealth of information.

The project is managed by a full-time director, an employee of the Montana State Library, who oversees all facets of the project including the addition of new collections, site design, organization and updates, communicating with the MMP contributors and managing annual costs and new purchases. An Advisory Council supports this project by increasing the visibility of the MMP to new contributors, increasing the visibility and usability of the MMP to new audiences, and by finding opportunities to fund new collections.

Where is it?

The Montana Memory project is an online resource found at:

<http://montanamemory.org/>

http://libraries.msl.mt.gov/Home/statewide_projects/montana_memory_project

What types of collections are available online now?

The collections are made up of a wide array of content including, photographs, documents, newspapers, yearbooks, maps, books, ephemera. The list goes on... We prefer a collection to have at least 25 items. There is currently no limit to the size of a collection. Collections can be added to over time, so many of our collections are continually growing.

Who uses it?

Anyone can benefit from using the Montana Memory Project. It is commonly used by researchers, genealogists, history buffs, and students.

Why digitize?

Many of the items included in the Montana Memory Project are rare. Prior to being digitized, these documents were housed in special collections across the state and were available for viewing only by traveling to that specific location and requesting access. Continued handling of these objects causes excessive wear and tear, eventually rendering the documents unusable. By providing copies online, the originals can be kept in a safe environment for long term preservation. Additionally, digital copies of

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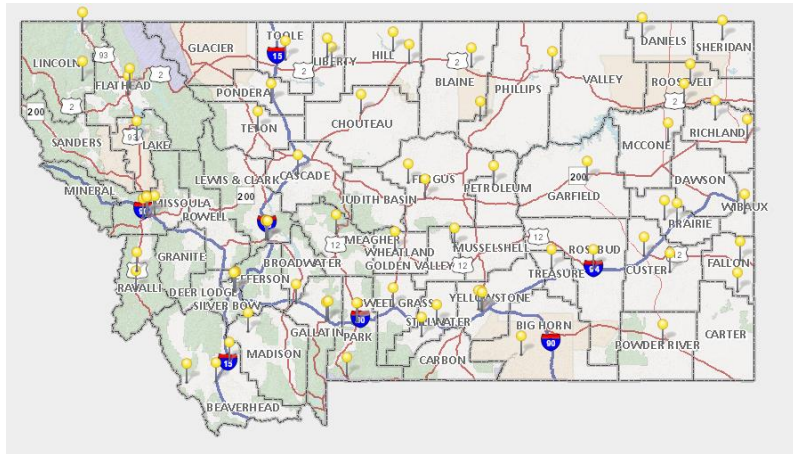


physical items allow greater access to materials that otherwise might be very difficult to use. Finally, digitized copies allow for greater searching capabilities. Optical Character recognition makes it possible for entire documents to be searchable by word or phrase.

Which parts of the state are represented in the MMP?

The MMP has collections from across the state and we continue to encourage collections from all locations in the state. We hope to represent as many communities in the state as possible. To see a larger, interactive map visit the link below.

<http://arcg.is/1zdyiky>



How is the Montana Memory Project funded?

Library Science and Technology Act (LSTA) funding provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Service (IMLS) and managed by the Montana State Library support the Montana Memory Project. The Montana Historical Society provides half the funding costs for the software licenses. Funding for this project is recommended by the Montana State Library Network Advisory Council and approved by the Montana State Library Commission.

Who can contribute collections?

All Montana libraries, museums, archives, and schools are invited to participate in the Montana Memory Project. The MMP is intended to increase accessibility to important documents that enhance understanding for all of our state, people, geography, and culture. Individuals with personal collections are asked to work with their local library to pursue adding collections.

What makes a good collection?

The best collections are comprised of at least 25 items of the same type. The most common item types are artwork, audio files, photographs, books, documents, maps, newspapers, and yearbooks. The item types are then grouped by themes. The most common themes are agriculture and homesteading, city histories, county histories, mining, military, Native Americans, and science and technology. Other questions to consider when selecting collection items include:

- Do the items relate to Montana and its culture?

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- Do the items tell a compelling story?
- Are the items rare or hard to find in their current format?
- Do the items have a broad appeal to Montana citizens and beyond?

What does it cost to contribute a collection?

The Montana Memory Project provides the contributing institution with the necessary software and the training to use it at no charge. The contributing institution incurs the expenses of digitizing the materials and adding the metadata to the project. These expenses vary widely by project, depending on the size and scope of the collection. Vendors can also be employed to scan items.

Each year, as funding allows, the Montana State Library provides collection development funding to organizations for having collections digitized. Funds are paid directly to a vendor for services related to digitization and metadata creation.

What is the process for contributing a collection?

- Step 1: Plan your collection.
- Step 2: Complete and submit a MMP Collection Application.
- Step 3: Your application will be reviewed by the Montana Memory Project's Selection Committee for approval.
- Step 4: Once your application is approved, you can begin the process of scanning and digitizing your items.
- Step 5: Set up a CONTENTdm software training with the Montana State Library.
- Step 6: Import your items and metadata into CONTENTdm's Project Client software for approval and index.
- Step 7: Review your new collection on the Montana Memory Project site.
- Step 8: Celebrate your new addition to Montana's statewide digital archives!

Where do the MMP Collections Live?

The original documents remain in the holdings of the contributing institution. The digital master files are also retained by the contributing institution and need to be maintained by that institution; we recommend saving the files in more than one location and adding the files to the Digital Archive (See long term digital preservation, below). Digital copies of the files that are accessible to end users are loaded to the Montana Memory Project through a software product called CONTENTdm provided by OCLC. These files live on servers maintained by OCLC.

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What is OCLC?

OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) is a worldwide library cooperative, owned, governed and sustained by members since 1967. Our public purpose is a statement of commitment to each other—that we will work together to improve access to the information held in libraries around the globe and find ways to reduce costs for libraries through collaboration.

How does the MMP guarantee safe, long term digital preservation of master images?

The Digital Archive is a specially designed system in a controlled operating environment dedicated to the ongoing managed storage of digital content. It is provided as part of OCLC digital content Hosted services. The Digital Archive supports the long-term management of data, including:

Physical security - The system is in a limited access operations facility monitored 24x7 by system operators, security guards, and cameras.

Data security - OCLC's dedicated information security team reviews the processes for applications, systems, and procedures.

Data backups - Copies of the content in the Digital Archive are geographically distributed in separate, secure facilities.

Disaster recovery - OCLC's facilities and systems are protected from both minor outages and major disasters.

How does the MMP provide broader exposure to our documents outside of Montana?

MMP collections are discoverable through WorldCat, a global database representing the holdings of libraries, museum and archives around the world.

The Montana Memory Project is a partner of the Mountain West Digital Library. Our records are harvested by this digital consortium and made available on their website at www.mwdl.org.

The Mountain West Digital Library is a service hub of the Digital Public Library of America. The hub records are harvested by the Digital Public Library of America and made available in their portals at <http://dp.la>.