

DLF Aquifer Report

Most Aquifer activities since the last board meeting have focused on the Mellon funded *American Social History Online* project. The core team is in place, project architecture is established and a new portal is ready. DLF has made subcontracts with libraries that will host Sakai and federated search solutions and development is on schedule.

The aquifer implementation group has been able to hire a strong core team:

- Susan Harum, Business Analyst/Assessment expert,¹ based at University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign (UIUC)
- Chick Markley, Systems Architect, independent contractor based in Berkeley, California
- Tom Habing, Research Programmer/Developer, based at UIUC
- Kat Hagedorn, Data Analyst, based at University of Michigan

Susan Harum and Chick Markley are full time on the project; Tom Habing and Kat Hagedorn are half time. Rather than seek a half time developer with user interface skills, the core team recommended that DLF contract with *citrus studios* a firm that specializes in web design within our market. The Aquifer working groups remain actively engaged in schema and tool development, community engagement and as advisors to the core team. For example, the metadata working group published service oriented *MODS Guidelines Levels of Adoption*, answers to frequently asked questions and a MARC to MODS transformation tool to support libraries contributing collections to *American Social History Online*.

Based on the projected timeline in the original grant proposal, the project is currently ahead of schedule. Expenditures are within budget and we expect to have expended the grant funds by the end of the project period, March 2009. Project detail budget information for FY2007 and 2008 are included in the DLF budget packet.

Activities listed for completion by October 2007 in the grant proposal were:

- Select architectural model
- Analyze objects and build data models
- Gather *American Social History Online* content
- Plan assessment activities

These tasks have been completed and a new web-services oriented portal with collections from five libraries is ready. The portal is being optimized for commercial search engine crawls to improve exposure for these collections. The portal has also been integrated with Zotero for citation management (see screenshot below).

Since the spring 2007 DLF Board meeting in Pasadena, I have spoken about DLF and Aquifer on a panel at the Rare Books and Manuscripts section of the American Library Association and at the Getty Research Institute in October.

Next steps are to bring in more content, progress on the Sakai integration, the federated search solution, and continue planning assessment activities. We continue to explore

¹ Called collections curator/assessment expert/faculty liaison in the proposal

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opportunities for small funded projects that would be contained within the Mellon funded grant period.

I have begun talking with library directors at participant libraries and with a range of people outside DLF including Kevin Guthrie and Rebecca Griffiths at Ithaka, Ricky Erway and Günther Waibel at OCLC RLG Programs and Martin Halbert and Katherine Skinner at Edutopia about business models and organizations that might sustain Aquifer, American Social History Online or some of its components after March 2009, when Mellon funding and DLF support for the initiative end. This effort is in the preliminary investigation stage and I welcome your ideas and suggestions.

The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window with the American Social History Online website. The browser's address bar displays the URL `http://72.32.219.170/asho/ASHO.html`. The website's navigation menu includes links for `home`, `about`, `collection descriptions`, `tools`, and `login`. A search bar is visible with the text "simple search" and a "GO" button. The main content area features a large image of a person standing in a field. To the right, there are sections for "By Subject Headings", "By Collections", and "By Time Period".

In the foreground, a Zotero library window is open, displaying a list of items. The list has columns for "Title", "Creator", and a count. The items listed are:

Title	Creator	Count
Mary Pollard and two women by a mountai...		1
We'll have to mortgage the farm		1

The Zotero window also shows a detailed view of the selected item, including fields for "Title", "Author", "Abstract", "Website Title", "Website Type", "Date", and "Short Title".