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Charleston Conference Future Dates

Editor

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school in the consortium would assess its collection in the area under scrutiny, utilizing the condition criteria developed for the War of the Rebellion and the Serial Set projects. The best copy of each item would be sent to the Newark facility. Creation of such a collection would have several benefits. It would allow participating schools to weed local collections and free up much needed shelf space while ensuring ongoing access, and it would also create a single collection that could become the focus of preservation efforts, a much more efficient use of preservation time and dollars.

The Subcommittee decided to use the publications of the Federal Security Agency as a test to assess the process itself as well as outcomes. This agency was established in 1939, dissolved in 1953, and its components transferred to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The process decided upon for this project was very similar to the one used for the Serial Set inventory: each school would add holdings and condition statements to a master file which would work its way around the schools. The project is still in this assessment phase: at least one school has discovered that a good number of its holdings in this area were at one point integrated into the general collection; identifying them is proving to be time consuming. However, the Subcommittee remains optimistic that this approach, while not a quick fix, will provide over time a consortial collection that is in better condition, more complete and more accessible than could be managed on an individual basis.

Cooperative Agreements

In addition to these projects the four CONSORT schools entered into three significant agreements regarding the collection and retention of materials:

- Kenyon will keep NOAA weather charts and CD; Denison will keep NASA Magellan CD.
- Denison maintains the archives of the Five Colleges Government Documents Sub-Committee.
- Denison agreed to be the map library of record for CONSORT.

Access

A final tool that assists with collection development and access is the OhioLINK courier system that transports not only patron-requested library materials, but also other documents among the Consort schools. The system can be used for quick and easy delivery directly to a staff member of fragile materials whose use needs to be mediated and in-house, or another library’s copy of materials that have been lost locally and which can then be duplicated as a replacement for that local collection as allowed by copyright laws. The courier system allows patrons and staff to receive materials from the consortial storage facility, creating part of the support structure for efforts such as the best agency copy project.

Concluding Thoughts

The relatively modest inter-library collection development cooperation that began in 1983 has evolved into an active consortially-based set of programs. As consortial cooperation has matured, attention has turned to the future. It has been several years since the initial zero based item review, and the evolution of the Federal Depository Library Program is creating a very different collection development universe for government documents. The move to a more electronic program brings up fundamental collection development questions for depositories: what does it mean to select an electronic item? What role does a library catalog play in the electronic age? What should be selected in paper, providing local long-term access, or in electronic format, over which libraries have considerably less local control? Additionally, in a consortium with a high level of cooperation and access to member collections, what items should each library select? Over the next several years the Government Documents Subcommittee of the Five Colleges of Ohio will build on our history of cooperation, our developed experience, and our tools to work through these questions together and as a group complete another zero based item review. As we look to the future it is our goal to keep refining our tools and methods, and to instill a consortial expectation that government documents collection development is a fluid enterprise that requires regular attention.

Future Dates for Charleston Conferences

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preconferences and Vendor Showcase</th>
<th>Main Conference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004 3 November</td>
<td>4-6 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 2 November</td>
<td>3-5 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 8 November</td>
<td>9-11 November</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007 7 November</td>
<td>8-10 November</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008 5 November</td>
<td>6-8 November</td>
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<td>2009 4 November</td>
<td>5-7 November</td>
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<td>2010 3 November</td>
<td>4-6 November</td>
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