

# NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES



## SAMPLE APPLICATION NARRATIVE

### Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions

Institution: City of Ontario

**NOTE:** This sample narrative conforms to a past set of grant guidelines. Please consult the revised guidelines for 2009 at: <http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/pag.html>.

### **Ontario City Library Model Colony History Room Preservation Assessment**

#### **Project Narrative**

#### **A. What activity (or activities) would the grant support?**

If selected, the National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation Assistance Grant will support three activities. The first being an overall assessment of the collections housed within the Ontario City Library's Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room by a professional preservation consultant. This activity would assess the physical collections and their current storage conditions as well as environmental conditions of the physical space within which the collections are housed. This assessment would be used to prepare short term and long term recommendations for preservation, housing, and environmental conditions. This assessment will be conducted by Julie Page of the California Preservation Program (CPP).

The second activity that the grant will support is the purchase of preservation and storage supplies, including acid-free archival boxes, interleaving paper, and archival file folders. The third activity would provide support for the local history librarian to attend the 2 week Western Archives Institute workshop offered by the Society of California Archivists, which will train the primary archive staff member in proper preservation techniques.

#### **B. What are the content and size of the humanities collections that are the focus of the project?**

The History Room consists of a public reading room and a closed stacks compact storage room. The total square footage of both spaces is approximately 1900 square feet. The contents consist of more than 4000 books, a periodicals collection, an ephemera/newspaper clipping collection, over 10,000 cataloged photographs plus thousands of uncataloged photographs housed within the boxed archival collections, and approximately 5000 film negatives and print slides. Also, the History Room has over 1000 audio-visual items including various formats of audio and video tape, records, optical media (DVD/CD), and motion picture film in 8mm, 16mm, and 35mm. Additionally, the History Room holds large format items

such as maps, architectural drawings, and aerial photographs, as well as newspapers, drawings and paintings, yearbooks from the local schools dating back to the early 1900s, and city created documents such as environmental impact reports, general plans, and city department minutes which date back to the inception of Ontario's cityhood.

The City of Ontario celebrates a rich history and heritage. The city was founded in 1882 by George and William Chaffey, brothers from Brockville, Ontario, Canada, who had come to America and settled in Riverside, California. George Chaffey was an engineer and was fascinated by the challenge of irrigating the arid region once known as the Cucamonga Rancho. On Thanksgiving Day in 1881, the Chaffey Brothers made an offer to Captain Joseph Garcia, a Portuguese mariner who left the sea behind to raise sheep in the area, to purchase his large rancho. The brothers purchased 5,000 acres of land from Garcia with full water rights. A small portion of that land was divided up and each lot was provided with irrigation from the nearby canyons. George Chaffey named this area Etiwanda, and sold the lots each complete with its own water rights to settlers. Etiwanda was such a success that the brothers decided to repeat the project on a grander scale. The Model Colony was born. It was named Ontario after the brothers' home province in Canada, in the hopes of luring fellow Ontarians to settle in the area, which it did. The library houses original business records and correspondence of the Ontario Land and Improvement Company, founded by George and William Chaffey in 1882.

The area became popular chiefly due to its rich agricultural lands. Citrus became the primary agricultural product, and in 1926 the Exchange Orange Products Company opened in Ontario, becoming one of its largest employers. In 1958, the plant became the research laboratory for Sunkist, and is still in operation in Ontario today. The library houses a collection of records relating to the Exchange Orange Products Company, as well as several books on the business and growing of citrus in California, issues of the California Citrograph, a magazine dedicated to the California citrus industry, microfilmed issues of the Ontario Fruit Grower which was the local newspaper documenting agricultural news and statistics statewide between 1882 and 1884, and photographs and ephemera items from Sunkist and other citrus businesses. In addition to citrus, Ontario produced olives, roses, peaches, and the nearby area of Cucamonga became popular for its vineyards, with wineries still producing wines today. The library houses hundreds of photographs documenting the area's contribution to the agricultural industry, as well as oral histories by members of the community who have been directly involved in agricultural development in Ontario. Our Armstrong Nursery Collection consists of hundreds of photographs of roses, camellias, and fruit trees developed by its founder, John S. Armstrong, their chief hybridist Herbert Swim, and other botanists employed by the nursery, along with early Armstrong nursery catalogs, issues of the *American Rose Annual*, and business records from its founding in 1889 through 1984. Armstrong Garden Centers is still in operation, with stores located throughout Southern California.

In 1904, a man named Earl Richardson founded the Pacific Electric Heating Company in Ontario, which manufactured the first electric flat iron, uniquely characterized by a hot point, a detachable cord, and a heel rest. By 1917, the company, renamed Hotpoint Electric Heating Company, was producing 500 irons daily, along with other appliances such as toasters, teapots, and stoves. Seeing the potential of this small manufacturer, the Edison Electric Company purchased Hotpoint in 1918, which became known as General Electric in 1927. The plant continued to manufacture appliances until it closed in 1982. Over its 78 year existence in Ontario, the General Electric Hotpoint plant manufactured more than 150 million irons, however stopping production between 1942 and 1944 in order to produce defense goods to assist

in the war effort. The library holds an extensive General Electric-Hotpoint collection in its archive. The collection includes business records, patents, photographs and negatives, scrapbooks, factory building information, and motion pictures among its contents dating between 1911 and 1982.

The Ontario City Library was established in 1885 by a small group of Ontario settlers. The library became a department of the city in 1891, the year the City of Ontario became incorporated. The main library and its smaller branch library hold over 200,000 books, magazines and newspaper subscriptions, a large audio-visual collection, and the main library also serves as a government repository for state and federal publications. The Ontario City Library serves Ontario residents as well as residents of several neighboring communities, totaling a service population of more than half a million people. Alberta Schaefer, the library director from 1932-1958, began collecting artifacts, ephemera, and newspaper clippings in the 1940s, in anticipation of creating a larger local history collection in the future. The collection grew from a small file cabinet to an attic filled with local history, when it became clear that there was a need for public space to share the collection. In 1970, the Model Colony History Room was established. The room was later named the Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room in memory of a former mayor who was one of the city's most important advocates for local history. In addition to collecting items of local historic significance, the library also houses its own archive, including items documenting the award of funds to build a new library from Andrew Carnegie in 1906.

### **C. How are these humanities collections used?**

The collections are used to create awareness of the area's history and to promote the rich heritage of San Bernardino County's West End. The collections are used most commonly by those who are interested in the area's history, a particular person affiliated with the area, or with a business, organization, or industry associated with the area. These users include local, national, and international members of the general public, scholars, genealogists, and historians, as well as local museums, local authors, and Ontario city planners or planners from nearby cities. We also serve elementary school, secondary school, and college level students assigned to complete projects on topics such as local history, architectural studies, agricultural studies, and city planning and development. Over the years, several published authors have utilized the collections for research, and have used photographs and information found in the collection in their published works.

The collections are also utilized to create library displays and exhibits promoting the heritage of the area, and in collaborative projects with other city departments such as the Model Colony Awards program sponsored by the City of Ontario Planning Department Historic Preservation Program, which awards residents who put forth outstanding achievements in restoring or maintaining their historic homes.

The library's archived collections such as the Armstrong Nursery Collection and the General Electric/Hotpoint Collection, as well as photographs and ephemera remain popular items of research. For instance, each year various collections are utilized by architecture students from California Polytechnic University in Pomona, California, who are assigned to research historic homes and districts within Ontario. In order to complete their assignments, the students use a collection of architectural surveys of hundreds of properties with structures built prior to 1940, as well as books, theses, and dissertations written about Ontario, its development, its population, and its industries, and also maps, photographs, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, and other ephemera items. The professor who assigns this project each

year uses Ontario as an example of city planning and period architecture due to the comprehensive collection of material housed by the library and because of Ontario's importance as a model of planning and development of California cities and communities.

**D. What is the nature and mission of your institution?**

Founded as a Model Colony, based on innovation, planned development, community service and family values, the City of Ontario has become the economic heart of the region. The City pursues goals that will preserve its history and promote its historical innovation in city planning. In our goals, we will encourage, provide or support enhanced recreational, educational, cultural and healthy city programs, policies and activities, and to concentrate resources on preserving the City's historic commercial structures, neighborhoods and housing stock and promote neighborhood identity in existing single family neighborhoods.

The mission of the Ontario City Library is to inform and inspire, to enhance the quality of life, and to foster lifelong learning. In addition to the library's overall mission, the History Room's purpose is to identify, acquire, archive, and preserve materials which provide information and documentation of Ontario history and the surrounding communities, past and present. These materials serve to support the research interests and information needs of Ontario residents and their neighbors, scholars, students, genealogists, and any other member of the worldwide public with a desire to learn more about our community and its history.

The 2006/2007 Ontario City Library fiscal year operating budget was \$4,915,550.00. This figure includes salaries, the purchase of books and other circulating materials, the licensing of electronic resources, equipment, building maintenance, cataloging and processing supplies, and general office supplies. Between the main library building and its smaller branch in South Ontario, the library employs 34 full-time staff, 37 part-time staff, and has 52 regular volunteers. The library is open seven days per week, excluding major holidays, for a total of approximately 3,150 hours per year. The History Room is staffed by one full-time librarian, one part-time page, and two part-time volunteers. The room is open approximately 1,026 hours per year and the collections are also available by appointment during the main building's operating hours.

**E. Has your institution ever had a preservation or conservation assessment consultation?**

Not by a professional preservationist or conservator; however, the local history librarian participated in a self-assessment of the audio-visual collection belonging to the History Room. This assessment utilized CALIPR, an online collection assessment tool created by the California Preservation Program. The data was utilized in a statewide assessment of audio-visual collections in a report written by the California Preservation Program. A copy of the assessment report for the History Room has been attached to this application.

**F. What is the importance of this project to the institution?**

Because the special collections have never been assessed by a professional consultant and because of the limited skills and experience in preservation by the History Room staff, the project is vital to the health of the collections and in the ability to provide the services promised in our mission to future generations. Currently, the majority of the collections are housed in non-archival storage cartons, and many

collections have not yet been processed and assessed for preservation needs. Additionally, the special collections have been moved twice during the past 10 years, being housed for three years in a historic city structure which lacked proper environmental control; therefore the long-term effects of the changing environmental conditions has not been established. The preservation assessment will provide the Library and the History Room with a plan providing short-term goals, which will also guide and assist us in addressing long-term preservation issues.

**G. What are the names and qualifications of the consultant(s) and staff involved in the project?**

**Julie A. Page, Consultant:** Ms. Page is Co-Coordinator of the California Preservation Program (CPP), an LSTA-funded initiative of the California State Library, and User Services Coordinator for the Western States and Territories Preservation Assistance Service (WESTPAS), a NEH-funded project. She is responsible for the CPP statewide training, building and collection surveys, and its information resources, including the [CalPreservation.org](http://CalPreservation.org) website. Ms. Page has published in the areas of preservation education and disaster preparedness and established the San Diego/Imperial County Libraries Disaster Response Network. Formerly she was Head of the Preservation Department at UC San Diego Libraries and has presented workshops for the American Library Association, Special Libraries Association, Society of California Archivists, International Foundation for Cultural Property Protection, and the Heritage Emergency National Task Force. She currently serves on the advisory committees for the FEMA Cultural Heritage Training Curriculum and NEDCC Model for Statewide Disaster Planning.

**Kelly Zackmann** is the local history librarian, and she is the primary full-time staff member in the History Room. In this role, she handles the majority of the public reference inquiries, supervises preservation projects, and processes collections. Ms. Zackmann graduated with a master's degree in Library and Information Science (MLIS) from San José State University in 2005, with a special interest in archives and preservation. She began working as a full-time reference librarian with the Ontario City Library in October of 2005, and has been the local history librarian since October 2006. She has attended several preservation workshops since her tenure at the Ontario City Library, and has utilized the skills learned from the workshops within the local history department. Ms. Zackmann will serve as the project director should the library be selected to receive the NEH grant.

**Joanne Boyajian** is the head of Adult Services, which encompasses the History Room. Ms. Boyajian oversees the History Room and also participates in archival and preservation projects, as well as provides local history reference service. After graduating from UC Santa Barbara in 1972 with a BA in History, Ms. Boyajian received a Master's in Science, Information Science (MSIS) from USC in 1974. She has worked in special and public libraries since 1974. She brings a personal as well as historic interest in this project as she grew up in Ontario and attended local schools up through Chaffey College, a local community college.

**Judy Evans** is the Library Director administering all functions and activities of the Main and Branch libraries. After graduating from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona with a BA in Behavioral Sciences, Ms. Evans received a Master of Library Science degree from California State University, Fullerton in 1977. After working for four years at the Medical Research Council library in Surrey, England she returned to the USA and was employed by the Ontario City Library working as a reference librarian, local history librarian, and Associate Library Director before her appointment to the directorship of the library.

**H. What is the plan of work for the project?**

June 2008

PEM will be placed in the History Room, on loan from the California Preservation Program

January 2009

The library will be notified of the award.

February-March 2009

Ms. Page will conduct the onsite preservation assessment.

March-April 2009

Ms. Page will provide her written assessment report, with recommendations for storage and housing, preliminary environmental condition changes, and provide a short range plan of action. Ms. Zackmann and Ms. Boyajian will review and discuss the assessment with Ms. Page.

May 2009

Ms. Zackmann will order the storage supplies with guidance from the consultant's report.

June 2009

Ms. Zackmann will attend the 2-week Western Archives Institute.

July-November 2009

Ms. Zackmann and Ms. Boyajian will work on the short range plan of action and continue to monitor the environmental conditions.

December 2009

The project will be complete, with 18-month environmental report and NEH report submitted.

Note: The use of consulting services, vendors, or other trade names is being provided for the information and convenience of potential applicants. Such use does not constitute an official endorsement, approval, or favoring by the U.S. Government, or by the National Endowment for the Humanities or any of its employees, of any product, service, or business to the exclusion of any others that may be available. The views and opinions of document authors do not necessarily state or reflect those of the U.S. Government, or the National Endowment for the Humanities or any of its employees.