

# Tell us your story.

## *Preserve your story.*

During National Preservation Week, SRMA (Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists) and the Western History & Genealogy (WHG) division of the Denver Public Library (DPL) teamed up to offer the public an opportunity to make an appointment for a free 20-minute consultation with a professional conservator. Individuals were invited to bring in their family treasures.

Project organizer (and SRMA preservation representative) Karen Jones recruited conservators with expertise in books and paper, photographs, textiles, paintings and objects. DPL's Western History & Genealogy staff offered participants the opportunity to scan and/or digitally photograph their items, and opt to have these images included in the IMLS-funded "Creating Your Community" online participatory archives. For 2012, a table staffed by an archivist supplied information on organizing small collections.

The Preservation Week event was publicized through emailing a pdf flyer to historical societies and library listservs; posting on facebook; twitter; The Denver Post's website; and posting on the official National Preservation Week map. We found that for this event and our target audience, the most successful method was old-fashioned advertising: emailing flyers to be posted in various institutions. A small article in the Denver Post boosted attendance and queries for the 2012 event.

The event was a success. There were over 40 registrants, many of whom brought multiple items to be examined. The 2012 event drew 45 participants. The items reviewed ran the gamut: letters and family bibles, colorful genealogical charts and scrapbooks, family photographs in multiple physical formats, silk wall-hangings and oil paintings, nineteenth century projection paintings, dolls, teacups, an antique player harmonica and even a twelfth century sword!

Overall, the greatest measure of our success was that a large number of the participants asked if the event would be repeated. Many of the participants were eager to tell the stories behind their documents, in addition to receiving conservation advice, which indicates great interest in the Creating Your Community project.

### Heartfelt thanks to the following conservators and DPL staff:

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written and designed by Karen Jones

