Transportation Librarians Roundtable
December 10, 2020
Transcript

I'm going to give ourselves another minute before we get started. We will begin things officially in one minute .

I think we will get started. That minute went by pretty fast. This is Bob:. On behalf of myself and Sam Strain I want to extend a big welcome to all of you for joining Murray for today's transportation library Roundtable. This is the final one of the year. We don't have a TLR in January however we made up by having two TLR's in August. This is a 12 month for the year and the final one as I already said. I appreciate you taking the time to join us. This is always a special one for us. Over the past several years it has become something of another December tradition to have colleagues from the National Transportation Library take time to share updates on their accomplishments and activities and also what lies ahead with the upcoming year. I think it is always a wonderful way to finish up our monthly gatherings here by hearing what our colleagues have to say. Be prepared for some very interesting and informative presentations coming up. Not to put added pressure on our speakers but I wanted to mention that. Before we go any further, I am going to ask that we go over the ground rules that we usually keep in mind. Go-ahead .

thank you. [inaudible] this is being recorded including discussion and Q&A. The best way to connect to the audio is via phone. First, mute your computer speakers by clicking the speaker icon in the top left of menu bar. That will help prevent echoing. Please remember to press star 62 mute your phone when you are not speaking. If you need to step away, please don't put us on hold as we will hear your hold music. The TLR is equipped with closed captioning. That is in the captioning bar. You can also use the chat pod to type in comments. Bob and I will monitor the chat and we will ensure your questions are brought to the attention of our speakers. Thank you. Now I will give a brief rundown of the presentations we have today. This is our end of year update from the national Library. We have a sample platter of [inaudible] to highlight across our work. [inaudible] we will have an overview of the new reference services featuring reference team members. Then we will have a data management update and lastly we will close with a [inaudible] for library transition and the library. That is all for me. Let's get started with David .

thank you. It is a pleasure to be with you all. This is my first TLR. I'm sorry couldn't be with you last month. I was doing something or other. If I am reading my calendar I have been on board for all of seven or eight weeks now. Is just long enough to see through the haze and get my sea legs. I would like to say by way of introduction that my life is an open book. I invite you to Peru's my LinkedIn page. I try to advance that slide but I am seeing a blank screen .

I can advance for you if you're having trouble. No worries .

would you, please?

I clicked on next and it went to blank white .

I am seeing your LinkedIn page .

wow. That is something .

I'll tell you what. Since I don't have eyes on that and I am blind, let me pull it up so I have it on my screen and I can actually see what it is I'm talking over. Excuse me for one second .

I will launch it on my desktop. Okay. For those of you with whom I have not yet connected, I invite you to send me a LinkedIn invitation. Pretty much my last 30 years have been in academics librarianship. I entered government service three years ago at national Defense University and I am coming from DOD to D.O.T. We just jumped ahead of slide. There we go. Okay. Well, I am getting a crash course in national libraries and transportation librarianship as you are probably aware there are four national libraries, medicine, agriculture and library of education. The first two have robust brick and mortar presences. [inaudible] however, and CL is virtual. We are in the cloud so it is not as if I can invite people from around the country or international to come to D.C. and get a tour of our facility or collections, per se .

that being said, we have a very definite charge. By law it is mandated that the library will acquire preserve and manage transportation information. But, information products and services and I am putting the stress here on the word services and I will get to that in a minute. It is pretty obvious what products and information products we have in our repository. It is the service that we provide that is the value-added piece that I want to emphasize. And, a huge part of my job as director is to publicize this and promote it. So information products straight ahead. We were all librarians. We are used to curating and making available information products in a variety of formats. It just so happens that NTL is exclusively digital at least for the first few foreseeable future. But, our information services are in the hands of our public facing reference librarians. You may have seen recently we advertised for a reference/outreach library just to give you a sense of where that is in the process, we will interview next week and hope to have somebody in that position by inauguration date. It is fast track and that person will be working very closely with me when outreach initiatives and reaching out to all of you as transportation librarians and reaching out to TR be and reaching out through and PK and, etc.

That is my primary goal as the new director, publicize, facilitate and promote. The primary job for me. Not the least of it is what we do through the librarians Roundtable and Sam has done a commendable job for us and Bob, they put together program the series of presentations. I hear wonderful things about what has been presented in the past that I hope to have some good input for you moving forward as I get to know you all better individually and understand what it is that you bring to the table. In trying to bring myself up to this bead on transportation librarianship guy came across Sheila's good work. I think she is on the call today. In which case, thank you for this nice piece of work you did for what seems like eons ago, I am sure regarding ROI on what we do as transportation librarians and the two basic types of ROI are tangible and intangible. What I want to focus on is the intangible and the value of the knowledge. It is interesting -- five years ago Syracuse they did an ROI study and they used what is known as a evaluation methodology and they basically asks the and user, what is it worth to you?

In other words, if you were able to acquire the goods or services that we provide and had to go to some other vendor, what would you be willing to pay for these goods or services and they were able to demonstrate an ROI of $4.5 on every dollar invested. That is an interesting way of looking at the value we bring to the equation. I will leave you with this today. I perceive information as performative and transformative in its functions. We all know that information is performative. People use information to perform any number of tasks that they might have. But, I think it is important for us to remember that librarians as mentors in the research process are the ones who can make that potentially transformative activity happened within the knowledge of management domain. Our services cannot be assigned transactional value. I have been in situations and my most recent is a case in point where the chief

operating officer, in terms of his dabblers seeing MO A's with external agencies wanted a transactional value put on everything we did. That is easier to do if you say it's going to cost us X amount of money in labor hours extended etc. to do an interlibrary loan of a journal article or book. You can't assign that transactional value to the research exchange, the service provided by the library. You know as well as I, you can have a two hour in-depth research interview with the client and the value comes to almost nothing for them. On the other hand, you can have a two-minute interaction and the transaction for the recipient can be almost invaluable in the sense that it was transformative to them and what they did with the information in terms of changing their mindset about what they were researching or in their development of a new research product as a result of it. So, what the intangible ROI will always contain that important antidotal element that remains unquantifiable. I am all about storytelling. I am all about shouting from the hilltops who we are, what we do, how valuable we are and I look forward in the near future to getting to know you all individually and getting to hear your stories. When I bring on our new reference out to the librarians I will set up one-on-one meetings with most, if not all of you so that we can hear your stories and we can begin to tell the story louder, more clearly, more succinctly and more often. We really have great stories to tell. We are incredibly valuable and I won't hesitate to blow our horns for us. With that being said, I have taken up my time. It's great to be with you all. Any quick questions before I handed over?

No questions just a quick comment. We are happy to have you aboard. We look forward to working with you as you take on these new and important responsibilities .

thank you. A pleasure. I look forward to it myself .

thank you. Next up we have Vicki from the reference team. Taken away and let me know if you need any help .

thank you so much. My name is Vicki Milo. I am a reference librarian working with NTL's reference services. NTL reference services uses the answers platform provided by spring sure to provide services. We thought this would be a great opportunity to reach out to the NTL users who might never have asked questions either by email or by the telephone. So we thought this would be a great opportunity to provide this additional service to the staff. Using live chats we identified customers needs and we resolve questions that may arise and oftentimes, if there is a particular question we cannot answer, we refer questions to our subject specialists when necessary. Our priority at reference services is to provide the exceptional customer service and do that group in a palm prompt matter. Our services are open Monday through Friday from 830 until 5:00 p.m. Thank you .

Charlotte?

Yes. My name is Charlotte Gavin. Recently referenced librarians have begun [inaudible] to online databases. The service has been very gratifying because people are often looking for certain articles and we can provide it off in the next day. Also, it has been interesting to be able to show them how to use the online databases and soon we will be offering Dun & Bradstreet [inaudible]

Thank you. I put links on the site. If you want to check out the live chat you can find it there.

[inaudible] have access to the materials hear that Charlie was talking about. You can let us know we can provide you with private sites. Next we have Jesse long on data services .

I'm here. I'm sorry I was having some technical difficulties .

you want to control the slides?

Yes. I will do it for you .

okay. Thank you .

I am going to give a view one some key things we have been working on this year. One big thing is that we have created and new collection for in pad. I have been working with the team to get the historical data in and in and easy to read data sets so people can make use of that data more effectively. That is a big thing. We have the rail import data currently in the collection along with the large Atlas database. We hope [inaudible] we are kind of waiting for that to go up before we get some more data into the collection. That is something we are actively working on right now. It is exciting. To finally have some concrete work going through the project is really great. Hopefully we will be able to put out more data in the next few years .

you can go to the next slide .

and another is that we have worked with is the national [inaudible] the last time we had data from this was in 2016 and it looks like our typical data set is 3-D files, metafiles, and then the survey dataset. For [inaudible] we have the database and story. You can see these great Web graphics and maps for the users. For us it creates a new workflow to create. We want to preserve the data and images in the software that is being used so if we need to re-create it in the future we have all that information there. We are exploring preservation packages with this data set which is very exciting. It creates new challenges that we are sorting through but something that is in progress right now and a new workflow we are developing.

This is where we currently are standing with a lot of the data sets. We have catalogued and are managing most of the data in [inaudible]. The ones without are highlighted blue and we don't have links for them. That means we are still kind of working on those. We have made some great strides in having more widespread data management for our data sets. I want to highlight one that I am currently working on and that is bias. We have been looking with the relaunching of the survey and we have a 2002 data set that will go out early this year. We have not been able to locate a lot of the other paths but we have been able to get access and find the data sets for five more and we are only lacking ones that have the data locked in different forms. We are excited to have those to be putting out hopefully in the new year and going through packaging them. That is a big thing we have been working on all year and hopefully we will get that out and have all this device data available by the time the new survey is conducted .

another big thing this year was revisiting the public access policy. As of right now the working group has created a new draft for public access and it is being edited. It will be sent out to you early in 2021. You probably will not be made public until the spring of 2021. There are couple of new elements that I will mention. We are -- the update has revolved around lessons learned. We are re-organizing language to make things that were guidelines into requirements or as we uncover new things implementing new

elements into the plan. One is software. Research projects and new programs for software. It needs to be managed. That includes putting [inaudible] and have it documented and clarified in that process and one thing we have seen and it has been suggested but it is a new thing that we are kind of seeing in proposed access policy. Hopefully that will fit. That is kind of where we are right now. It is still being edited and revised. Hopefully by the spring of 2021 there will be a new version of this policy available to the public .

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the final thing I want to talk about is the SOS working group. A lot of work has been done with them this year. It is the effort of the White House there has been a lot of work done within the working group in recent years and we are hoping that a number of best practice documents will be made available to the public within the next few months and on their website and when that happens we will send out links to those so you will have them. I'm going to talk briefly about the identifiers working group, the one I have been active in this year. So we have looked at [inaudible] are being used across the federal government and where different agencies stand with them are they guidelines, requirements, I have a use them? We have a survey and have multiple agencies fill it out and then we created a language from within the documents online, what is required and what we want to move toward across all the government webpages. There will be something you see in a document in the future. If you have any questions on any of the other working groups and their work, you can always direct that to asked the librarian and they will send it to someone on the working group. We have a working relationship with all of them. If you are interested in any of the other work, definitely weren't reach out .

I've given you a lot of information in a short amount of time. That is an overview. If you have any questions, feel free to get in touch with me .

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okay. If you have any questions, you can type them in the chat. Okay. Next up we have Mary Moulton.

Good afternoon. I'm happy to get a chance to talk to you about what I spent most of the year working on. In addition to my regular job I also was tasked with moving the Department of Transportation headquarters library from a virtual -- a physical library to a virtual collection and services. If we can have the next slide?

This is a picture of what our previous library looked like this was before we downsize the first time, 2015. I know many of you remember when that happen. Is everything okay?

I thought somebody was stepping in. The national transportation library was founded in 1998 as an all digital library and as many of you may be aware, the Department of Transportation was founded in the late 60s under the Johnson administration. I headquarters library was put together from different collections that existed in the pieces of transportation agencies that existed across the federal government. A lot of these libraries were in the Commerce Department but they showed up in other places as well. There was a physical library that merged with the national transportation library around 2008. When I was hired, it was one big library with a physical space that you see here as well as the digital repository. In 2015, we began under the first big federal sequestration which restricted funding severely, we downsized not just staff, we downsized the physical space and we -- a lot of the state reports were sent to GSA. If you were in a state library your state D.O.T., you could take back some of your materials and I know some of you did. We also put a lot of materials into storage at that time and that was primarily U.S. D.O.T. research reports representing all models. In 2016, the national transportation library completely -- was completely separated from the headquarters library.

Earlier this year we kind of got a heads up about this in February and in early March, right before you all began working from home full-time, we were notified that the headquarters library would be closing and we were approached to assess and transfer the different services as well as make a plan for the donation, did digitization of the collection. I began an assessment right away of the D.O.T. headquarters library services materials and resources and we had a dropdead deadline of October 1 of this year. This was a whirlwind a project that took place almost entirely remotely. At the very end of the project, a few people entered the building and removed items from the shelves. The areas that I assessed were description services for journals and databases that Charlotte told you about earlier. We still have access to an ILS which is a diamond system called eos. We inherited an inter-library delivery service which was primarily through OCLC, website for the headquarters library. They were until about one year ago still offering reference services primarily to U.S. D.O.T. employees and also the physical collection.

This is really a case study in how to do this. This is part of a larger presentation and this will be a whirlwind presentation today. I would be happy to meet with any of you or put together a longer presentation but you're going to hear the basics of how we went through this in a short amount of time. I assembled an advisory team with people from NTL as well as the former headquarters library and, David Jones. He now works for the office of General counsel Burke Dawn and Shawna as well as Lisa Schuler and Cassondra all well. We met every two weeks and they really helped me hugely with decisions about everything. You will see what we did in subsequent slides.

Next slide .

the first thing I had to tackle was the subscriptions and services. Many of these were set to expire. Headquarters library managed the descriptions. These were only for U.S. D.O.T. employees and they had something set up so that employees on the intranet could have access to those. I went through and evaluated usage statistics for all of these as well is the cost. I did think that at the time, I would be able to identify new services. That won't be possible until next year. I have been thinking about this while I'm going through the renewals and looking at usage. The other thing that I intended to do and I am still working on is explore shared services with the other D.O.T. libraries and that is primarily federal highway research libraries and the technical research center. I have also conducted outreach to the FAA library in Atlantic City as well as the merchant Marine Academy library and even the Coast Guard Academy library, even though they were once part of D.O.T. and are now part of Homeland security, those librarians were incredibly helpful when it got to collections for maritime. I looked at all these things and subsequently I am now -- we got some of these contracts taken care of in the summer and I am still working on transferring contracts even today. Next slide .

the inter-library loan is important for U.S. D.O.T. headquarters researchers and employees since we don't have a very large physical library and that we don't have a physical library at all. We want to provide access to materials not held locally. The strategy here was to evaluate digital document delivery service. I actually identified several alternatives. We're kind of locked into this contract until the end of this fiscal year so I do have some ideas about how this might play out. Right now, we are using OCLC's world share and the referenced theme is processing IL L request. I have had a chance to look at the service and do an evaluation. I'm also interested in reaching out to different academic libraries for the possibility of subscription library services. That would expand not only what we can borrow, also may give us access to research databases through the services of an academic library in. I will be working on that this year and I actually have reached out to a few of you. I have some ideas about that and I think that will be an important future partnership for us.

As far as the website is concerned, the website went away for the library. We migrated all of the subscriptions access points and the interlibrary loan forms to an internal SharePoint site so that it is only accessible to employees. We also set up our service metrics so we would be certain to capture those for the U.S. D.O.T. mode. That will be important one year from now when we take a look at our matrix and evaluate the services to see how effective we are managing those funds and services .

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as you know, we have a library and reference service and once the HQ library closed, we picked up what -- we had fully transferred professional reference services to NTL. We always did provide service to people across DMT. As well as our externally facing public and other professional with D.O.T. but we made a point to make sure that all of the [inaudible] services were forwarded to the reference desk and we have updated the FAQs to reflect that and this was a good move. Again, we are making sure that we are collecting the internal matrix, not just [inaudible]. We hope that will help us improve services as we move along.

Our library platform, we actually share our catalog with technical research centers library. FHWA uses the same slot platform on a different contract we don't share the same database. So I am in the process right now of renewing this. It is uncertain for me how much further into the future we will retain a catalog. Mostly the use for NTL for the catalog is at a record of items that we will digitize in the hopefully near future and then [inaudible]. This is kind of still transitional at this stage.

Here is the best part, the collections. I went through over 30,000 items that were in the collection. I did this virtually and [inaudible] go to the next slide and I will show you how I did this. On the holdings for the HQ library including the Department of Transportation directories. Some of these we had already partially inventoried. The Dale grinder collection, he was a historian that previously worked for the Department of Transportation and he had collected all these items and over the years we had developed needs an index the entire collection so we have that. That is of physical collection. There is microfiche and those are items that we own. I mentioned the [inaudible] of the library. That is approximately 11,000 technical reports and those are in a D.O.T. warehouse in Landover. I did a complete inventory of the collection using that catalog and from that I was interviewing people across the D.O.T. and I selected candidates for digital preservation and consulted with some federal partners on donations that I mentioned to you. Basically I was looking for items that were unique to D.O.T. and D.O.T. publications, things that pertained to D.O.T. history and the history of transportation. The last copy [inaudible] at risk material and mostly ignored things that were still in copyright or would be in copyright for a long time. So that is how I identified material.

Next .

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the Federal Highway administration research library, the librarians there took quite a number of items out of the library. That was our biggest donation. They plan to digitize those items and make them available. When I'm going to talk about next are the things that are highlights of some things we took out an first I will tell you a little bit about the Dan grinder collection. It is the history of the department and these items were collected by our former historian and these are speeches, articles, photographs, correspondence, lots of things that appeared in the media and what have you, all about D.O.T. Next slide .

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this is a photograph of the first Secretary of transportation and he is meeting with Lyndon Johnson, he was president at the time when the D.O.T. was founded in the late 60s. We have 18 original photographs of former secretaries. This one is Alan Boyd. He passed away recently. I was very happy to

share this with people in the Bureau of transportation. These have all been archived and are in protective sleeves .

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we have some news items that appeared in popular media. This was near and dear to my heart because I was such a fan of the Jeffersons. This article appeared in the magazine, Jack. In the 70s that was a very popular magazine. Popularly primarily in African-American communities but just really a wide circulation. William Coleman was the first African-American Secretary of transportation and the second to serve in the U.S. cabinet. This is actually a cool thing and I am trying to think of creative ways to maintain the context of this article and the great cultural context that surrounds it.

We have a map archive. This is a fully indexed database of the national Park maps, historical sites and other public spaces and there are tourist maps included in this. This is fully indexed and we are ready to go with digital preservation. Next slide. We also included in this collection are historic maps and these are street maps, transit maps and other schedules.

Here are some other items, state highway maps. They have all been in archival boxes of these are pretty cool. These are also part of that map database. Next slide .

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we have a large collection of department news letters, news releases or newsletters. A lot of these have been indexed and processed and are ready to be digitize. These are going to be a great, great resource of primary resource of the history of the Department of Transportation. I am very excited about being able to digitize the Zen I have funding obligated for this project. That should be happening very soon.

And another -- dessert news digest prepared by the office of Public affairs on a weekly basis. Our treasure trove for those doing historical research. So the next things that have to happen, we have moved items to storage. That already happened and by storage I mean closets all around the Bureau of transportation and empty cubicles because people are working from home right now. We have identified a space and are organizing a research area for access to the physical items. We would like to have scholars researchers and anyone be able to come into the building and actually be able to sit down and review and go through some of the materials that we will leave in a physical format and we will be spending -- this is going to be a big part of my job moving forward, reviewing and selecting and managing the digital preservation of D.O.T. publications and other materials that are of unique historical value. The plan for that will include outsourcing as well is in-house digitization and we also are planning to set up a small digitization lab in D.O.T.

I want to put this in context for you. On the left you can see a little rundown of our current collection. We currently have 40,000 items that represent the U.S. D.O.T. modal research. Also in the sponsored research results with the University transportation centers. Over the last two years we started to add a lot of legacy digitized content. These work, if you remember, art digital collection. It was a very popular collection and the investing geisha and of railroad access. We have several other in our catalog. John Montgomery has done a lot of work on those. By the time we finished moving the collections into [inaudible], that should happen in 2021, we will have [inaudible] that is in addition to the 40,000. We are no longer going to be able to say that we are a mostly digital library. We will have significant [inaudible] copies of transportation material. We also have copies of the research publications in storage in Landover, Maryland. That is over 11,000 research reports that we will be making a plan for digitizing and then also going through [inaudible] lastly [inaudible] oral histories. So I am very excited about the future for the national transportation library and this project, working on these materials will make them accessible to people with no restrictions and it is always sad to close a library but it is very exciting

to think that everyone will have access to these items and there is a lot of [inaudible] material here. The future looks really good and with that [inaudible] and my presentation. We have a few minutes left for questions for everyone.

Thank you, very much. Thank you to all of our speakers over the past hour. Wonderful information and insights from each of you. We do have a few minutes remaining for questions and answers. David did make a point of saying that she did an awesome job and great presentation. Mary, I do have a couple of things to bring to your attention. I see Penny Simpson and John indicated they have EOS at their respective libraries. And I know I so in the committee you had shown us people who were working on all of these [inaudible] I say that because Sue has been here. I salute Sue for all of her efforts in that important endeavor. Mary, there is a question that was brought to -- I saw here from Cara. She was asking about those newsletters you reference. How far back in time to those go?

Those go back to the late 60s. A big chunk of them are from Federal Highway administration. Not exclusively. They pretty much run all the way up until the 90s when we started -- late 80s or 90s when we started to have interdepartmental email and transmission of information that way. So it is a long run of them and I do want to also point out the departmental directories which are an incredible source of who was working where and when. I think that is a unique source. I don't think anyone else has the newsletters or those directories.

Thank you. I want to clarify to my knowledge, the secretary never did appear on that TV show, the Jefferson. However the Jeffersons have made it into a TLR. I think that was wonderful there. I guess it is safe to say that the TLR is moving on up. In terms of any other questions or comments we still have a little bit of time if anybody has anything to ask of our speakers. While we are waiting, David I would like to get back to you about something you discussed. You framed the issue of ROI and you gave well-deserved credit to Sheila for her efforts and the efforts of the Minnesota D.O.T. to really focus on the significance of our alignment. I guess I have been having more of a lightbulb over the head moment as far as ROI goes. Then you deal with something like coronavirus and the flexibility we bring. I can't quite spell it out in ROI terms but it occurs that is probably a key example of how that is another example of what we bring to the collective table. My question to you is, have you had any similar epiphanies as far as I/O goes or something worth highlighting [inaudible] yes. I have and the total evidence for the value we bring. It becomes a matter of following up to ascertain the impact we have had. I think it is important for us [inaudible] we will find out the impact that the research information products we provided has had on the end user so we have these stories that we can package and sell to the people who uphold the pursestrings, for other entities who are looking for is to demonstrate that value which is why I keep coming back to the storytelling of what we have always done and have always done so well. Might go thank you. I appreciate that. We are at the top of the the hour. I have one more question. I posted it.

[Event has exceeded scheduled time. Captioner must proceed to next scheduled event. Disconnecting at 3:01.]Captioner must proceed to next scheduled event. Disconnecting at 3:01.]