Building a Heritage Network

What does Washington County Heritage Online do?

Washington County Heritage Online (WCHO) is a cooperative project of libraries, museums, and cultural institutions that will bring the visual history of our county to the public. This project is supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the Oregon State Library.

Celebrates Local History

WCHO is made up of thousands of photographs from all around the county. Each organization's photographs show the unique identity of that community. The variety in the collection helps to foster a better understanding of the activities and people that populate the history of Washington County. Providing access to these photos will create a stronger dialogue about our collective history.

Encourages Cooperation

WCHO allows for cultural organizations to work together and understand each other better. We often have similar missions – and similar problems. Working together allows us to leverage resources and to educate each other on the different missions of our organizations.

Shared Standards

Creating a focused project like WCHO allows for the creation of a standard that everyone can adhere to. WCHO uses digitization standards created by the Library of Congress and the National Archives, and we developed a metadata schema based on Dublin Core. The WCHO cataloging guide also utilizes controlled vocabularies such as the Library of Congress Subject Headings and the Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus.

Allows for Wider Access

WCHO allows for wider access in two ways. First, it allows users access to the collections of small libraries and historical societies through a single, centralized database. Second, using national standards makes it easier for us to share our collection with others. Google, WorldCat, and the Oregon Digital Library are some of the places where WCHO items will appear.