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Establishing an Omeka Digital Exhibits Presence: Collaboration and Customization

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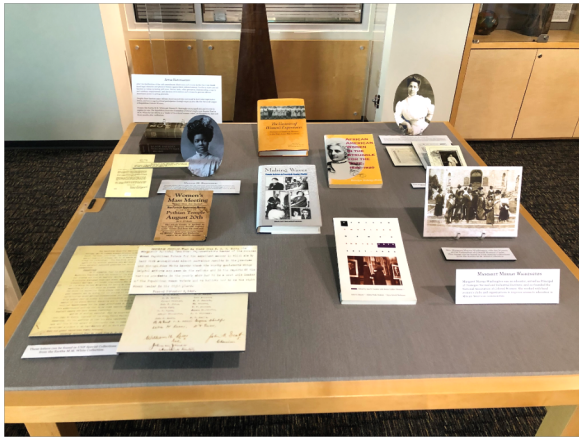
Establishing an Omeka Digital Exhibits Presence: Collaboration and Customization

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Jenn Bibb, Coordinator, Special Collections & University Archives

Thomas G. Carpenter Library



Physical Exhibits & Digitized Materials

- We have several physical exhibit cases for materials from Special Collections and University Archives.
- We offer digitized materials through our institutional repository, the [UNF Digital Commons](#), arranged by department and collection.
- We wanted a visually appealing way to offer digital exhibits featuring narrative text and materials from different collections.

UNF UNIVERSITY of NORTH FLORIDA Digital Commons

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Thomas G. Carpenter Library

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Author Information

Home > Special Collections and University Archives > SPECIAL_COLLECTIONS

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Selected digitized materials from the Thomas G. Carpenter Library's Special Collections.

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Browse the Special Collections:

- [A.B. Temple Letter](#)
- [Afro-American Life Insurance Company Collection](#)
- [Ansel Brooks Smith, Sr. Letters](#)
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 - [Archbishop Desmond Tutu Collection Textual](#)
- [Arthur N. Soltes, Sr. Papers](#)
 - [Arthur N. Soltes, Sr. Textual Materials](#)
- [Black History of Jacksonville Collection](#)
 - [Black History of Jacksonville Images](#)
 - [Black History of Jacksonville Textual Materials](#)
- [Camp Joseph E. Johnston Collection](#)
 - [Camp Joseph E. Johnston Collection Correspondence](#)



Omeka

[+ install this application](#)

Omeka is an open source content management application.

Overview

What's New

Live Demo

Showcase

INFORMATION

Application	Omeka
Category	Cms
Current Version	2.8
Last Updated	26 March
Languages	English

REQUIREMENTS

Install Size	80MB
License	open source

SUPPORT

- [Omeka Website](#)
- [Documentation](#)
- [Support Page](#)
- [Installatron Auto-Installer Support](#)

RELATED APPS

Omeka is a free, flexible, and open source web-publishing platform for the display of library, museum, archives, and scholarly collections and exhibitions. Omeka is a Swahili word meaning to display or lay out wares; to speak out; to spread out; to unpack. Omeka falls at a crossroads of Web Content Management, Collections Management, and Archival Digital Collections Systems.

Omeka is designed with non-IT specialists in mind, allowing users to focus on content and interpretation rather than programming. It brings Web 2.0 technologies and approaches to academic and cultural websites to foster user interaction and participation. It makes top-shelf design easy with a simple and flexible templating system. Its robust open-source developer and user communities underwrite Omeka's stability and sustainability.

Until now, scholars and cultural heritage professionals looking to publish collections-based research and online exhibitions required either extensive technical skills or considerable funding for outside vendors. By making standards based, serious online publishing easy, Omeka puts the power and reach of the web in the hands of academics and cultural professionals themselves.

Easy to use:

- Omeka is designed with non-IT specialists in mind, allowing users to focus on content and interpretation rather than programming.
- Omeka is a web application, making it accessible from any computer or mobile device with an internet connection.
- Users say Omeka is "simple," "logical," and "unscary."

Strong community of documentation and support:

- Learn to use Omeka with step-by-step tutorials and screencasts available in the documentation.
- Connect with other Omeka users and the Omeka team through end user forums and developer discussion lists.

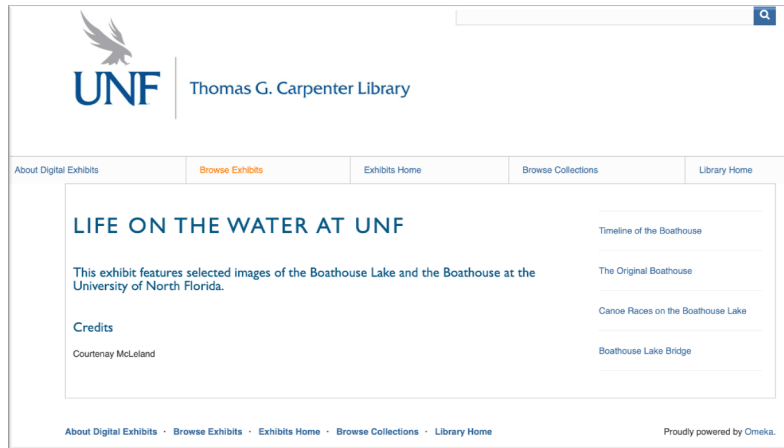
Extensible, scalable, and flexible:

- Omeka can handle large archives of meta data and files (with over 100,000 items).

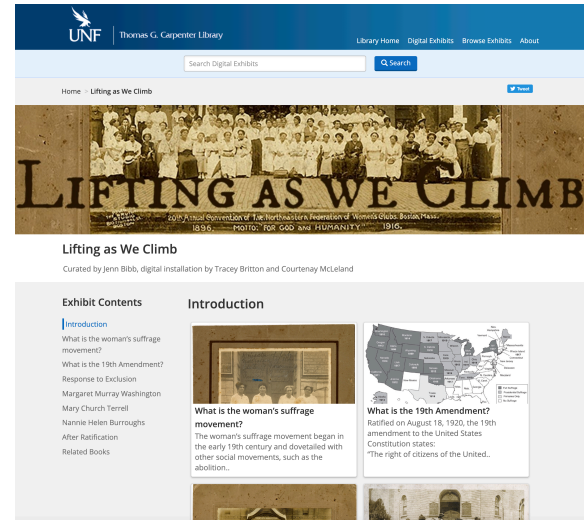
We worked with UNF's Center for Instruction & Research Technology (CIRT) to establish a digital exhibits presence for the library using Omeka Classic which is free and open source.

Themes in Omeka

Several default themes are included with Omeka Classic. Our current theme was customized. We began with Berlin and now have a customized theme, as seen on the right.



The screenshot shows the 'Berlin' theme interface. At the top left is the UNF logo and 'Thomas G. Carpenter Library'. Below this is a navigation bar with links: 'About Digital Exhibits', 'Browse Exhibits' (highlighted in orange), 'Exhibits Home', 'Browse Collections', and 'Library Home'. The main content area features the exhibit title 'LIFE ON THE WATER AT UNF' and a description: 'This exhibit features selected images of the Boathouse Lake and the Boathouse at the University of North Florida.' To the right of the description is a vertical list of links: 'Timeline of the Boathouse', 'The Original Boathouse', 'Canoe Races on the Boathouse Lake', and 'Boathouse Lake Bridge'. At the bottom left, there is a 'Credits' section listing 'Courtenay McLeland'. At the bottom right, it says 'Proudly powered by Omeka.'



The screenshot shows the 'Lifting as We Climb' exhibit page. The top navigation bar is blue and includes the UNF logo, 'Thomas G. Carpenter Library', and links for 'Library Home', 'Digital Exhibits', 'Browse Exhibits', and 'About'. A search bar is located below the navigation. The main header features a large historical photograph of a group of women, with the title 'LIFTING AS WE CLIMB' overlaid in large, bold, black letters. Below the photograph, there is a caption: '60th Annual Convention of The Northeastern Federation of Women's Clubs, Boston, Mass., 1916. PHOTO: FOR GOD AND HUMANITY - 1916.' The page is curated by Jenn Bibb and is a digital installation by Tracey Britton and Courtenay McLeland. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled 'Exhibit Contents' and includes links for 'Introduction', 'What is the woman's suffrage movement?', 'What is the 19th Amendment?', 'Response to Exclusion', 'Margaret Murray Washington', 'Mary Church Terrell', 'Nannie Helen Burroughs', 'After Ratification', and 'Related Books'. The right column is titled 'Introduction' and contains two text boxes. The first box, 'What is the woman's suffrage movement?', explains that the movement began in the early 19th century and dovetailed with other social movements. The second box, 'What is the 19th Amendment?', states it was ratified on August 18, 1920, and is the 19th amendment to the United States Constitution, guaranteeing the right of citizens of the United States to vote. There are also two small images at the bottom of the page.

Finding a Theme/Plugin

- Exhibit appearance is controlled by themes in Omeka.
- You can use different themes for various exhibits.
- We conducted an environmental scan of other Omeka instances hoping to find a theme that allowed us customization of our header and footer.

Examples of Various Sites

- Omeka Classic Themes
 - Square Dance History Project- Big Picture
 - Humboldt Redwoods Project- Thanks, Roy
 - St. Johns College Digital Archives- Seasons Theme
- Omeka S is a new and different version of Omeka with a focus on linked data. It is not available in our instance of faculty domains.

Adapting an Omeka Theme

- We decided the available default themes did not satisfy what we wanted, so we explored custom themes.
- UNF adapted the [U. Michigan theme](#).
- The MLibrary theme is available on [GitHub](#).
- Most of the coding changes were undertaken by a student who worked with Adam in Library Systems.

Accessibility

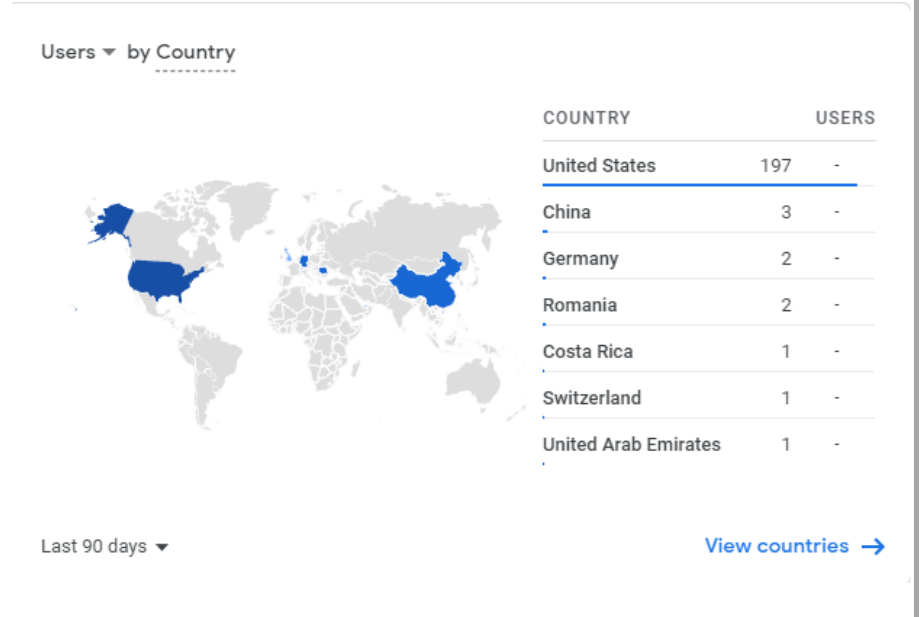
- Whether you are adapting you own code or using your own custom theme you should keep accessibility in mind.
- Use accessibility tools such as <https://wave.webaim.org/> to check your site for accessibility issues.

How to Deploy Omeka

- Carpenter Library hosts Omeka via UNF faculty domains.
- Other options are available to host your Omeka instance.
 - <https://www.omeka.net/>
 - <https://reclaimhosting.com/> suggested by Omeka
- Host Omeka with your own server but this requires technical expertise.

Tracking Usage/Engagement

- The UNF Library uses Google Analytics
 - We added Omeka to our current analytics.
 - You can also add Google Tag Manager to track more data.
 - Plugin is available to integrate Google Analytics if you don't want to edit theme code.



Tracking Usage/Engagement

- Privacy-focused Google alternatives:
 - Matomo offers Cloud and On-Premise services. On-Premise service is free if you are running your own servers, either hosted or local.
 - Fathom is cloud-based only and a bit more affordable.

Preparing content:

Why we create exhibits?

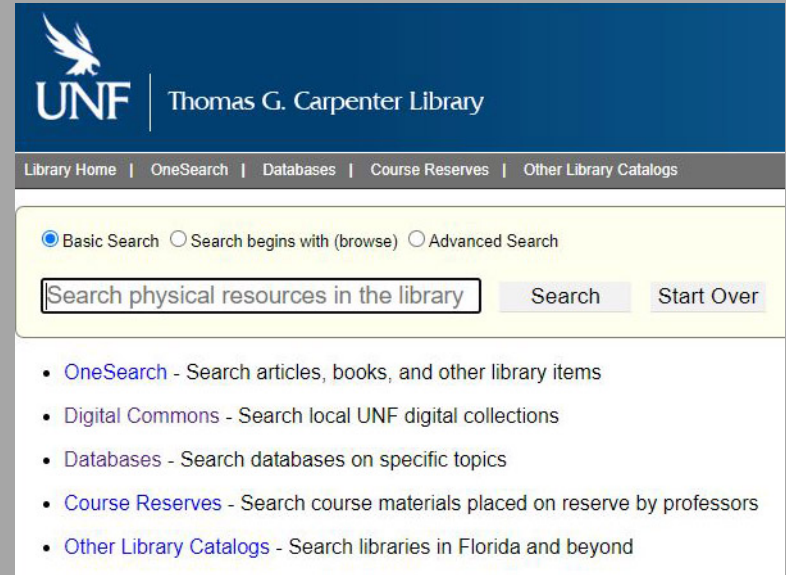
- Outreach opportunities to core campus audience
- Showcase collection items held at library
- Increase interest in utilizing collections for research

Benefits to creating digital version of exhibit

- Extending life of past physical exhibits
- Bringing physical exhibits to a much wider audience
- Can expand digital content of exhibit beyond physical constraints of exhibit space

Preparing Physical Exhibits

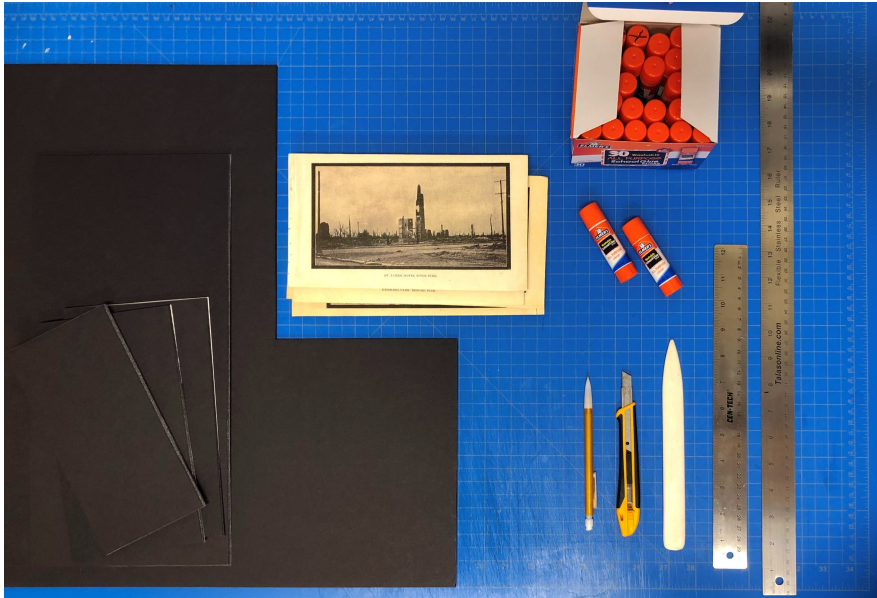
- Select exhibit topic or theme relevant to collections held in Special and General Collections
- Research topic and review library collections to select materials for the exhibit using:
 - Finding Aids and Container lists
 - Digital Repository
 - Library Catalog



The screenshot shows the library's search page. At the top, there is a dark blue header with the UNF logo (a stylized bird) and the text "UNF | Thomas G. Carpenter Library". Below the header is a navigation bar with links: "Library Home", "OneSearch", "Databases", "Course Reserves", and "Other Library Catalogs". The main content area has a light yellow background and contains three radio buttons for search options: "Basic Search" (selected), "Search begins with (browse)", and "Advanced Search". Below the radio buttons is a search input field containing the text "Search physical resources in the library", a "Search" button, and a "Start Over" button. At the bottom of the search area, there is a list of search options:

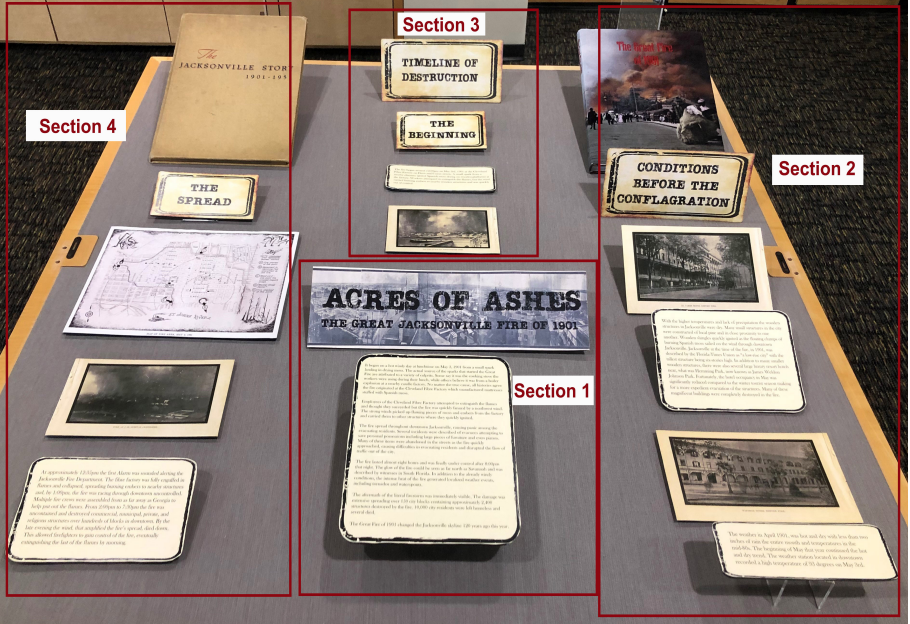
- [OneSearch](#) - Search articles, books, and other library items
- [Digital Commons](#) - Search local UNF digital collections
- [Databases](#) - Search databases on specific topics
- [Course Reserves](#) - Search course materials placed on reserve by professors
- [Other Library Catalogs](#) - Search libraries in Florida and beyond

Preparing Collection items for Exhibit



- Pull Collection items to create high quality scans of original collection items
- Edit files, make exhibit labels, print exhibit content
- Cut and mount items
- Set up exhibit
- Photograph Exhibit

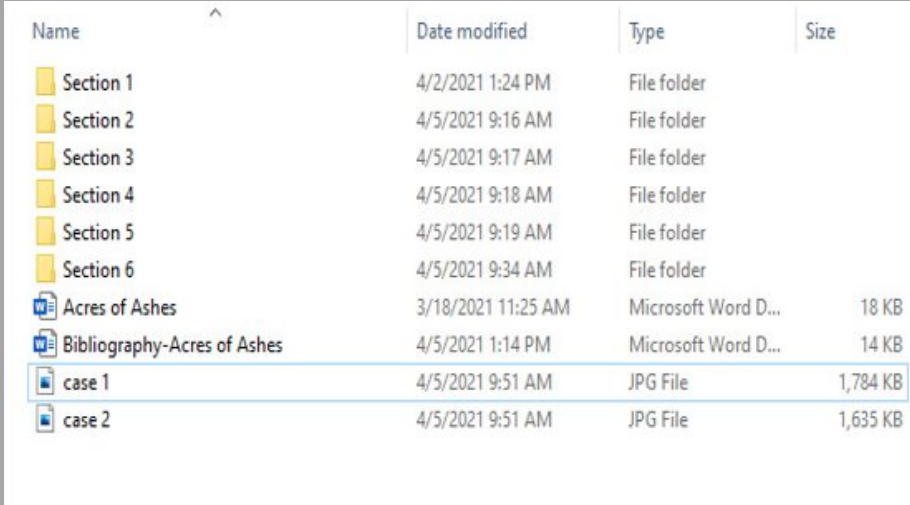
Moving Physical to Digital



Organizing files by section based on the physical exhibit helps maintain the narrative flow of the original exhibit.

Organizing Folders

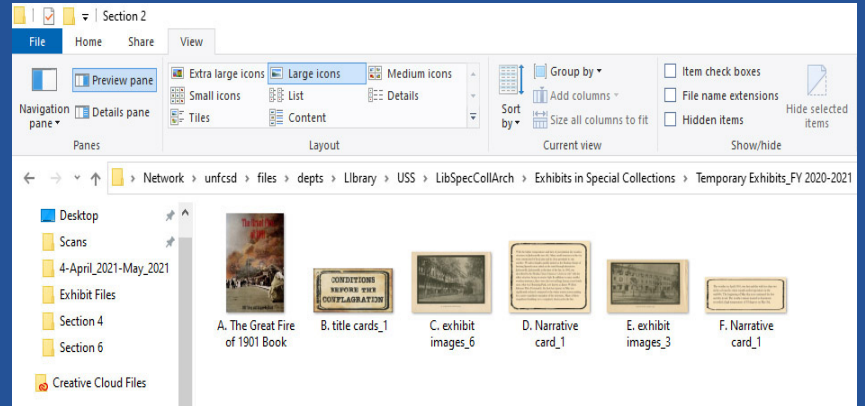
Create folders for each section of the physical exhibit to organize the digital files, for example: Section 1, Section 2, Section 3 etc.



Name	Date modified	Type	Size
Section 1	4/2/2021 1:24 PM	File folder	
Section 2	4/5/2021 9:16 AM	File folder	
Section 3	4/5/2021 9:17 AM	File folder	
Section 4	4/5/2021 9:18 AM	File folder	
Section 5	4/5/2021 9:19 AM	File folder	
Section 6	4/5/2021 9:34 AM	File folder	
Acres of Ashes	3/18/2021 11:25 AM	Microsoft Word D...	18 KB
Bibliography-Acres of Ashes	4/5/2021 1:14 PM	Microsoft Word D...	14 KB
case 1	4/5/2021 9:51 AM	JPG File	1,784 KB
case 2	4/5/2021 9:51 AM	JPG File	1,635 KB

Organizing Files

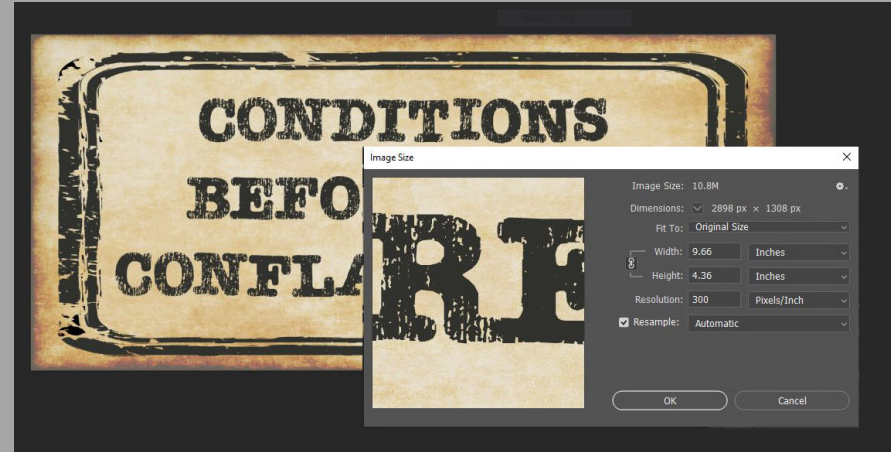
Organize files in each folder based on physical exhibit and the order the files should appear in the online exhibit. Ex: A. Title Card, B. Image, C. Caption



File Parameters

Typical parameters for digital exhibit files:

- Banner 1600x360
- Image files- 300DPI, jpg



Compile Documentation

- Compile a word document of all narrative cards and captions
- Create bibliography of resources used
- Link images of book covers in exhibit to the library catalog

1. Acres of Ashes:

- a. It began on a hot windy day at lunchtime on May 3, 1901 from a small spark landing in drying moss. The actual source of the sparks that started the Great Fire are attributed to a variety of culprits. Some say it was the cooking stove the workers were using during their lunch, while others believe it was from a boiler explosion at a nearby candle factory. No matter the true cause, all histories agree the fire originated at the Cleveland Fibre Factory which manufactured mattresses stuffed with Spanish moss.

Employees of the Cleveland Fibre Factory attempted to extinguish the flames and thought they succeeded but the fire was quickly fanned by a northwest wind. The strong winds picked up flaming pieces of moss and embers from the factory and carried them to other structures where they quickly ignited.

The fire spread through Jacksonville, raising havoc among the suburban

residents. Several modern possessions including large were abandoned in the street evacuating residents and

The fire lasted almost eight The glow of the fire could witnesses in South Florida of the fire generated local

The aftermath of the liter extensive spreading over destroyed by the fire. 10,

The Great Fire of 1901 ch

Bibliography:

Section 2:

A: [The Great Fire of Jacksonville](#) F319 .J157 F64 2001

C and E: [Jacksonville in Flames](#)

Section 3:

D: [Jacksonville in Flames](#)

Section 4:

A: [The Jacksonville Story: A pictorial record of a Florida city](#) F319 .J157 R38 1950

C: [The Jacksonville Story: A pictorial record of a Florida city](#) F319 .J157 R38 1950


D: [Jacksonville in Flames](#)




































2. Conditions Before the Conflagration

- a. The weather in April 1901, was hot and dry with less than two inches of rain the entire month and temperatures in the mid-80s. The beginning of May that year continued the hot and dry trend. The weather station located in downtown recorded a high temperature of 93 degrees on May 3rd.

Transferring Files

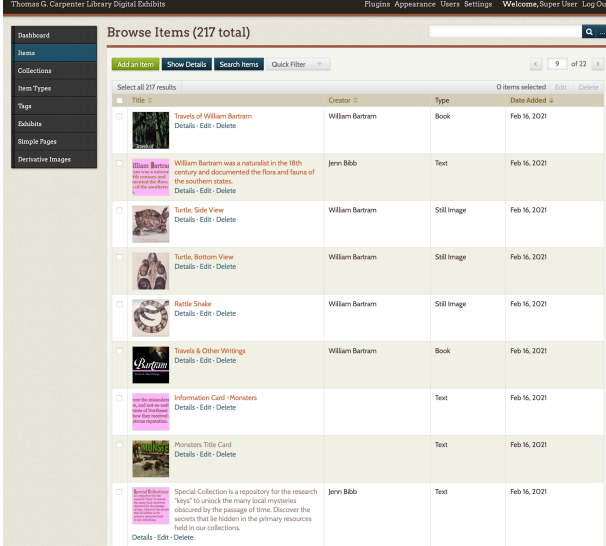
Transfer the files to a shared OneDrive folder for ease of access for our Digital Projects team to create the Omeka exhibit

My files > Omeka Exhibit Planning > Omeka Exhibit Items from SC > Omeka > April 2021-May 2021 










 Name 	Modified 	Modified By 	File size 	Sharing
  Section 1	Yesterday at 6:37 AM	Bibb, Jennifer	2 items	 Shared
  Section 2	Yesterday at 6:37 AM	Bibb, Jennifer	6 items	 Shared
  Section 3	Yesterday at 6:37 AM	Bibb, Jennifer	4 items	 Shared
  Section 4	Yesterday at 6:37 AM	Bibb, Jennifer	5 items	 Shared
  Section 5	Yesterday at 6:37 AM	Bibb, Jennifer	8 items	 Shared
  Section 6	Yesterday at 6:37 AM	Bibb, Jennifer	22 items	 Shared
  Acres of Ashes.docx	Yesterday at 6:37 AM	Bibb, Jennifer	17.5 KB	 Shared
  Bibliography-Acres of Ashes.docx	Yesterday at 10:14 AM	Bibb, Jennifer	13.1 KB	 Shared
  case 1.jpg	Yesterday at 6:37 AM	Bibb, Jennifer	2.41 MB	 Shared
  case 2.jpg	Yesterday at 6:37 AM	Bibb, Jennifer	2.50 MB	 Shared

Adding Content and Creating Exhibits in Omeka

- Begin by adding the individual items to be placed in an exhibit.
- There are many options for how detailed or simple the metadata can be. Omeka uses Dublin Core.
- Items may be sorted into Collections.



The screenshot shows the Omeka interface for the Thomas G. Carpenter Library Digital Exhibits. The main content area displays a list of 217 items, with the first few visible:

Select	Title	Creator	Type	Date Added
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Towels of William Bartram Details - Edit - Delete	William Bartram	Book	Feb 16, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/>	 William Bartram William Bartram was a naturalist in the 18th century and documented the flora and fauna of the southern states. Details - Edit - Delete	Jerrn Bibb	Text	Feb 16, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Turtle, Side View Details - Edit - Delete	William Bartram	Still Image	Feb 16, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Turtle, Bottom View Details - Edit - Delete	William Bartram	Still Image	Feb 16, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Turtle Snake Details - Edit - Delete	William Bartram	Still Image	Feb 16, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Towels & Other Writings Details - Edit - Delete	William Bartram	Book	Feb 16, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Information Card - Monsters Details - Edit - Delete		Text	Feb 16, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Monsters Title Card Details - Edit - Delete		Text	Feb 16, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Special Collection Special Collection is a repository for the research "key" to unlock the many local mysteries obscured by the passage of time. Discover the secrets that lie hidden in the primary resources held in our collections. Details - Edit - Delete	Jerrn Bibb	Text	Feb 16, 2021

Thank you!

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