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Cutting Through the Magnetic Tape: Collaborative Preservation of Endangered Videos

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Project Overview

Cutting Through the Magnetic Tape: Collaborative Preservation of Endangered Videos

Assessing the Collection

The Saline Area Historical Society is home to a collection of oral histories recorded on several outdated formats. Recorded over the course of 30 years, the collection is a vital part of Saline's local history.

The collection consists of roughly 130 items. Included are oral histories and original recordings of historic Saline, recorded on VHS, audio cassette, hi8 tape, open-reel audiotape and 16mm film.



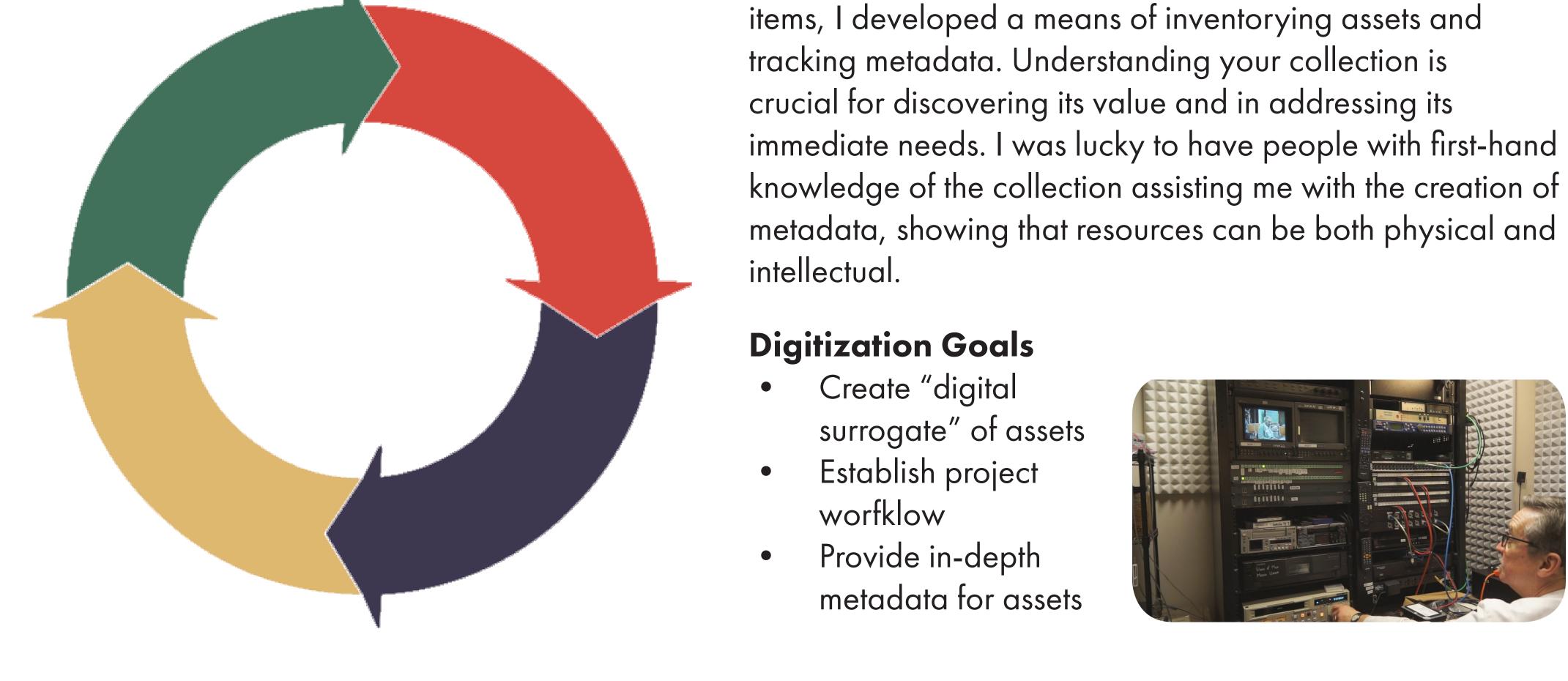
During this time, the collection has been stored in the basement of the historic Rentschler Farm Museum. These conditions have been less than ideal, causing great concern for the collection's safety. Having had experience digitizing at-risk collections, the Library Mini-Grant gave me the resources necessary for rescuing these assets. I was still working with a small budget, so this project posed many unique, real-world problems to overcome.



Project Outcomes

- Tapes digitized
- Creation of digitization guidelines
- Creation of inventory system
- Establish long-term storage

There are many instiitutions, big and small, struggling to deal with their audiovisual collections. This is usually due to a lack of funding and tecnical knowledge. The main goal of this project was to establish a template for preserving media, given a shoestring budget. I hope that other students seek to develop projects of their own as there are many more collections requiring attention.



Digitization Goals

- Create "digital surrogate" of assets
- Establish project worfklow
- Provide in-depth metadata for assets

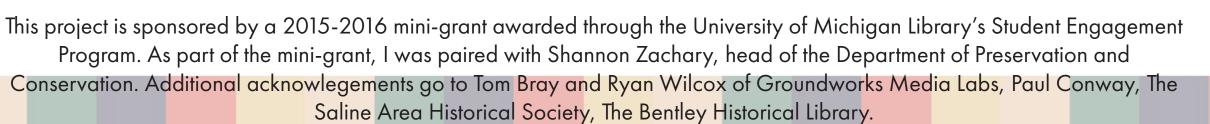






Digitization was performed by myself within the University's Duderstadt Center. Many cultural institutions rely on vendor digitization of assets, as the equipment necessary to do so is becoming exceedingly difficult to come by. Although I had experience in similar settings, the knowledeable staff at the Duderstadt was crucial for completing my project.

Project Impact



Digitizing the Collection