SDSL's Cornerstone Newsletter

South Dakota State Library's e-newsletter

December 23, 2021

Scan Day with SDSL

Carlie Peterson, Digital Library Associate, and Mary Schumacher, Digital Library Technician, are the South Dakota State Library Digitization team. While Carlie and Mary are normally located at the South Dakota State Library, one exciting project allows them to visit libraries and museums across the state – Scan Day.

Scan Day is an event hosted in libraries or museums across South Dakota, in which digitization staff from the South Dakota State Library bring scanning and photography equipment to a community and digitize photographs, documents, and objects. The purpose of this event is to get residents to engage in building local and state history by bringing in personal records, photographs, and objects to be digitized.

The items brought by participating community members are scanned or photographed, and then the items are returned to the participants. They are then given a USB drive that includes digital copies of the items they had scanned.

If your library would like to host a Scan Day, you can contact Carlie Peterson at Carlie.Peterson@state.sd.us. If you would like to learn more about Scan Day, you can visit the South Dakota State Library LibGuide.

Carlie Peterson (left) and Mary Schumacher (right) with their Scan Day equipment at the Tripp County Library.

Scan Day Interview with Carlie Peterson and Mary Schumacher

What do you love about doing Scan Days with libraries?
Carlie: It has been so fun to see the history throughout the state with the items that patrons bring in. Each patron has brought in something unique that ties into their communities today. Hearing their stories is one of the best parts of these events.
Mary: I enjoy visiting the libraries and meeting the librarians and patrons. My favorite part of Library Scan Day is spending time with great people and learning of their histories. It's great to hear people tell stories about their ancestors, their precious memories, special events, and days gone by. I love the big smiles when people share a memory.

Why are Scan Days important for communities and libraries?
Carlie: Scan Days are great opportunities to be able to preserve history or important documents. If anything were to happen to the original item due to age or accident, there is still a digital record of the item. I have also watched the event bring communities together as patrons connect with one another while explaining the stories behind their items.
Mary: Preservation of local history is important. We have scanned photos of city celebrations, historical buildings, and community leaders. Libraries may find importance in the event by bringing

patrons into the library and beginning conversations about the families that make up the community both then and now.

Do you have any Scan Day stories that made an impression on you?
Carlie: At one of our events in September, there was a mother and daughter that stumbled upon the event while they were traveling from out of state to do some genealogy research. They had just started this research on a whim, and the library and some of the patrons were so helpful in providing information and resources specific to the town. They were able to find the plot of land that their family had owned and found some more details about their family. They were so joyful every time they found more information and it was so fun to witness.
Mary: I'll never forget the patron who brought in her grandmother's identification papers from WWII. When she took the papers out of her folder, she teared up. It is very humbling to know what our ancestors went through to survive hard times.

What is the oldest or most interesting item you've scanned?
Carlie: The oldest and most interesting items that I have scanned were a birth record and a war record that were tied together. The individual was born in Germany in 1831 and served in the German military from 1851-1854. It was amazing to see that piece of history and to be able to preserve it digitally for the patron.
Mary: I have scanned some tin-type photos. I've also scanned some WWII documents. People have brought in century old documents such as birth certificates, citizenship papers, marriage certificates, etc. They are usually very delicate and show wear on the edges and fold creases. It impresses me how special these documents are to the families after so much time.

Is there anything else you would like to share about Scan Day?
Carlie: While we help preserve many patrons' historical items, it is also just as important to preserve more modern items. We have scanned people's important documents such as medical records, birth certificates, marriage licenses, etc. It can be useful to have backups for these items in case of an accident or disaster.
Mary: Library Scan Day is a great way to get your keepsakes digitized, get into your local library, and visit with others who may share the same type of historical interests. The State Library does not keep a copy of your personal documents and photos. These are scanned and saved on a USB drive that is given to you and cleared off the laptop that we use for scanning.

SDSL LibGuide: Scan Day

Merry Christmas to you & yours!

THE SDSL WILL BE CLOSED:
-
CHRISTMAS WEEKEND:
THURSDAY AFTERNOON, DEC. 23 &
CHRISTMAS EVE, FRIDAY, DEC. 24
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NEW YEARS EVE: FRIDAY, DEC. 31

About SDSL