Revitalizing Access: The Journey of Bringing the VHEC's Legacy Collections Online

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Topics we can cover

- Collections development and donor relations
- Internal and external accessibility of our collections
- Digitization practices
- Labour and resources
- Ongoing development of a web-based collections website
- Anything else!
Accession Worksheet

98.004

Accession No: 98.004
Date Recorded: 03-04-1998
Accession Date: 19-01-1998

Source: Wendziak, George / Katz, Tyleen

Title: Gottfried file

Items Received
51 letters, certificates, and travel documents relating to the immigration of the Gottfried family from Germany to Shanghai to the United States.

Places of Origin
Germany, China, U.S.A.

Dates of Creation
1917-1948

Circumstances of Acquisition:
File found in dumpster by donors.

Additional Information:
Family of creator has been contacted.

Notes
### Audio/Video Info

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Title: The bravest battle: the twenty-eight days of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

Restrictions: Discarded Sep. 1/09 (duplicate copy)

Language: English

Sub Heading:
1. Warsaw (Poland) -- History -- Uprising of 1943.
2. World War, 1939-1945 -- Underground movements, Jewish.
3. World War, 1939-1945 -- Poland.
5. Ghettos -- Poland -- Warsaw.
6. The bravest battle: the twenty-eight days of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

Summary:
Step by step account of the climactic twenty-eight day struggle of the Warsaw Ghetto Jews.

Notes:
Illustrated with maps and photographs.
Includes notes and bibliography.
- Confirmed item in library Jan. 24/08 (SL)
New CollectiveAccess-based collections website
RA079. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/1017
05:57
WHAT LANGUAGE DID YOU SPEAK AT HOME?

NK spoke German with everybody except her grandparents with whom she spoke Yiddish. She knew no Lithuanian.

06:22
DESCRIBE YOUR DAILY LIFE BEFORE THE WAR?

When NK was very young, she spent most of her time with nannies. NK describes it as difficult as they were very strict. Once they started moving in the late ’30s, NK was with her parents all the time.

WAS THERE A LARGE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN YOUR TOWN?

NK doesn’t recall if it was a large community, but all their friends were Jewish. The nannies were not Jewish.

[VIDEO AND AUDIO CUT OUT]

07:47
WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT YOUR FATHER’S WORK?

He enjoyed his work.

08:00
DID YOUR MOTHER WORK?

NK’s mother had fun. She knew a lot of people and they would go to coffee houses to socialize. She learned about photography but never did it professionally in Lithuania. NK has a lot of pictures of her family taken by professional photographers.

10:00
WAS IT COMMON AMONG YOUR FRIENDS TO HAVE NANNIES?

Everybody had nannies. NK had a friend, Felix Fogelman [NY], that she would visit often. She went to a pre-kindergarten.
In Focus: The Holocaust through the VHEC Collection relied heavily on the new description and digitization work to find materials for display!

Two photographs currently on display at the VHEC. On the left, Klara Forrai is pictured at a demonstration at Bergen-Belsen. On the right, a group photograph with David Feldman in the back row, second from the left, in front of the camp’s gate.
Improving digitization workflow

Server and storage guidelines
- Access copies
- Masters

Implementing consistent post-processing procedures
- Isolating item from scanner background and adding white background that matches CA or simple grey background
- Straightening text (better OCR)
- Sharpening
- Slight drop-shadow

Creating a Photoshop Action Set
- Quicker post-processing time
- Creates consistent outcome

Batch converting TIFF files to JPEG for access copies using Adobe Image Processor

Documentation of guidelines and procedures
At this point use the toggle handles in the corners of the item to rotate the image to be level/straight. This is generally a balance between the item being square/straight and the text/image being straight.

Next the item will need to be isolated from the background of the scanner.

There are a number of tools that can be used to isolate the item from the background. In this document, the Quick Selection tool will be used. The Quick Selection tool is found on the side toolbar shown below.

- The QS tool works like a paint brush where you ‘paint’ the area that you want to select. Like the brush tool, the radius or size of the brush can be adjusted to get finer detail or larger areas. The size can be controlled with the drop-down menu or with the Open and Close square brackets.

Next the selection needs to be refined.

- The selection needs to be expanded by going to the Select drop-down menu and choosing Modify – Expand.
- Set the expand to somewhere between 2 and 5 pixels. Hit OK.

- Next the selection is smoothed. Select – Modify – Smooth. Generally best to smooth no more than 2 pixels. More and the corners of the selection start to round.
Before Post-Processing Edits

After Post-Processing Edits
Front-end example that shows the difference of post-processing edits.
Converting scanned page to Searchable Image

Running OCR in Adobe (We would scan multi-page items as TIFF files, do post-processing edits, combine pages as PDF, and then run OCR before uploading to Collective Access). Item is: https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/12158
Considerations for the front end:

• Re-arranging certain fields
• Prioritizing the "Scope and Content" and "Description" fields to be moved to the top of the page
• Adding hover notes for title notes and date notes
• Renaming fields i.e., "Access Points" to "Subjects – Topical"
• Hyperlinking "Genre" and "Resource Type"
The Way Home

ARCHIVAL ITEM | IDENTIFIER 2002.008.037

EXTENT & MEDIUM 1 leaf

SCOPE & CONTENT
Item is a story about Mottel E. Menczer's return to his destroyed, emptied shtetl, after liberation.

DATE OF CREATION [195-]

LANGUAGE Yiddish

AUXILIARY DOCUMENTATION

IMMEDIATE SOURCE OF ACQUISITION OR TRANSFER
Donated to the VHEC by Micha Menczer in 2002.

LOCATION IN COLLECTION
Mottel E. Menczer fonds > Writings

PERMALINK
https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/8786

Mock example of proposed front-end changes