Franco American Digital Archives / Portail franco-américain (FADA/PFA)

Centering Franco-American Communities in Digital Discovery

Susan Pinette & Jacob Albert University of Maine Franco American Programs

6



Franco American Digital Archives Portail franco-américain

Home

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Learn

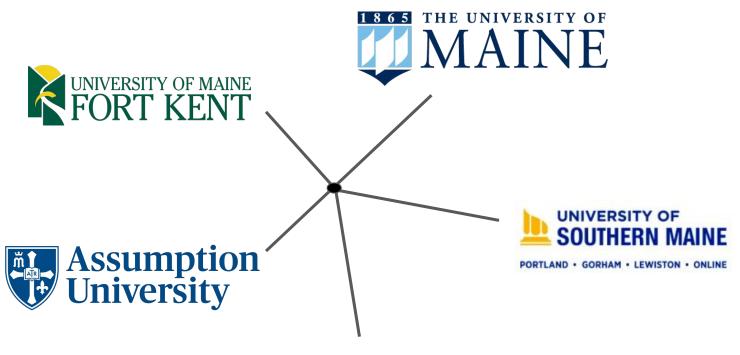
About *

Support



Abstract of this presentation

During this presentation, we will introduce FADA/PFA to the Digital Commonwealth community and outline its collaborative efforts to center Franco-American community researchers and overlooked archival materials within the digital archives landscape. We will outline our multi-year collaboration to conceptualize a multi-institutional portal; identify and aggregate overlooked collections from over 75 North American institutions; build contributing partnerships; transform and translate metadata with culturally specific markers; fundraise; and build a sustainable, post-custodial, bilingual digital system–all within the context of COVID-19 shutdowns and distancing. We will detail how the portal and consortium pay particular attention to culturally-specific knowledge construction, "centering" Franco-American communities and local knowledge within practices of information organization and archival description. We will also discuss our aims to grow and evolve the portal and consortium to raise awareness of this historically underserved cultural and language community, with collaborating institutions and team members spread throughout the United States and Canada.







Franco American Collections Consortium

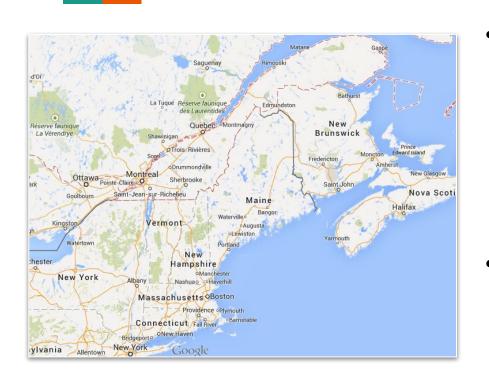
Purpose

Franco American Collections Consortium is a collaboration of universities, archives, and centers that maintain vital collections of books, documents, photos, oral histories, art, maps and artifacts related to French-Canadian and Acadian heritage communities. We collaborate to unite resources, create educational materials, provide leadership, and promote Franco American literacy among researchers, academics, the general public, and Franco Americans themselves.

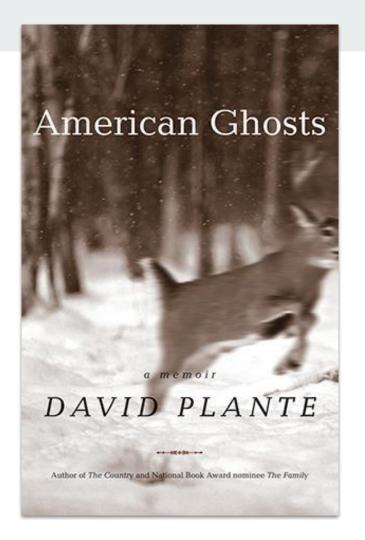
Mission & Vision

Franco American Collections Consortium works together to make accessible the history and culture of Franco Americans in the Northeast and beyond. Together, we keep Franco American history and culture alive.

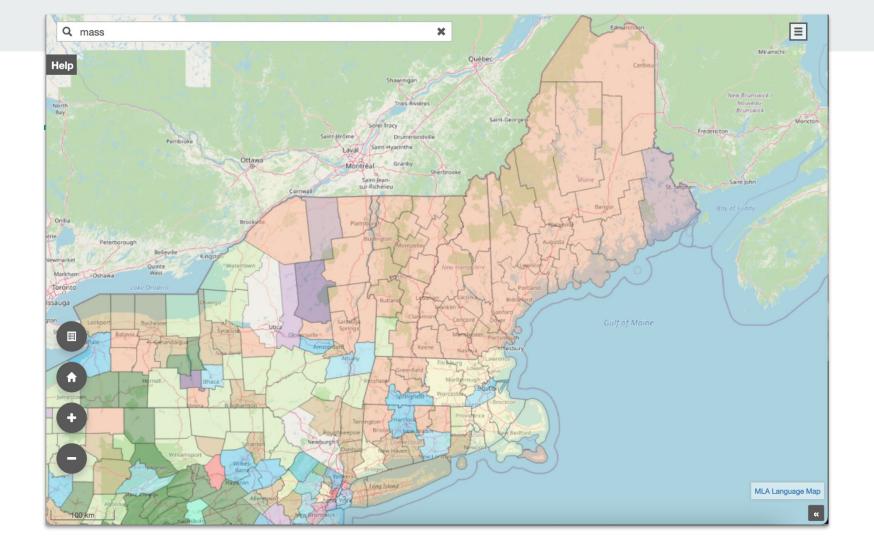
The term "Franco-American" refers specifically to people of Québécois and Acadian heritage living in the United States.

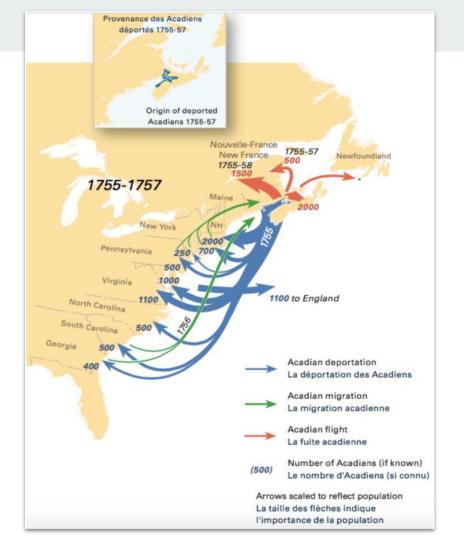


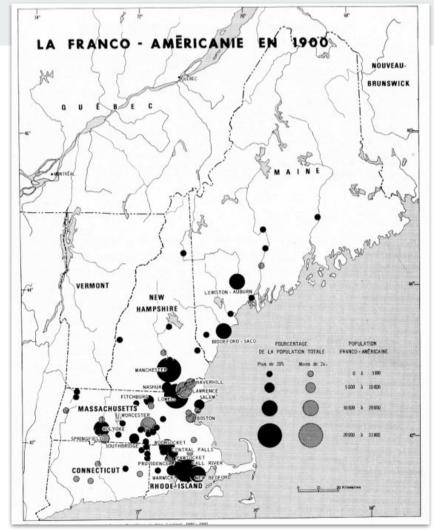
- Composed of rural francophone settlements in northern Maine that date back to the eighteenth century and communities of French Canadians who started immigrating to industrial New England towns in the late nineteenth century, Franco Americans constitute the largest concentration of French speakers in the United States. In New England, Franco Americans account for up to 26% of state populations.
- According to the US census, respondents claiming Canadian/French/French Canadian ancestry constituted 24% of Vermont, 26% of New Hampshire, 25% of Maine, 16% of Rhode Island, 8% of Massachusetts, and 11% of Connecticut populations.



"When at the French consulate in Boston, I had applied for a visa to study in France, I wrote in the space on the form where 'nationality' was asked for, 'French,' for that is what I thought my nationality was" (78).







Ignored communities

These ignored communities constitute one of the largest concentrations of French speakers in the US.

Linguist Cynthia Fox writes, "Although Americans are generally aware that there is in the US today a numerically significant, culturally distinct, and historically French-speaking population in Louisiana, many are surprised to learn that the same statements also apply to another subset of the population, the Franco Americans of the Northeast."

Bruno Ramirez called the borderland region between the US and Canada an "historiographical desert."

Why this work?

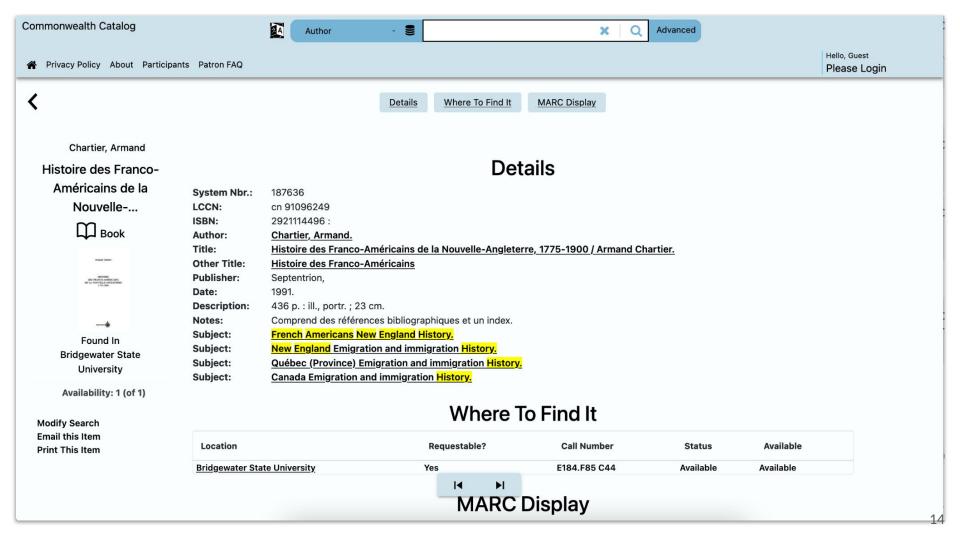
Why this work?

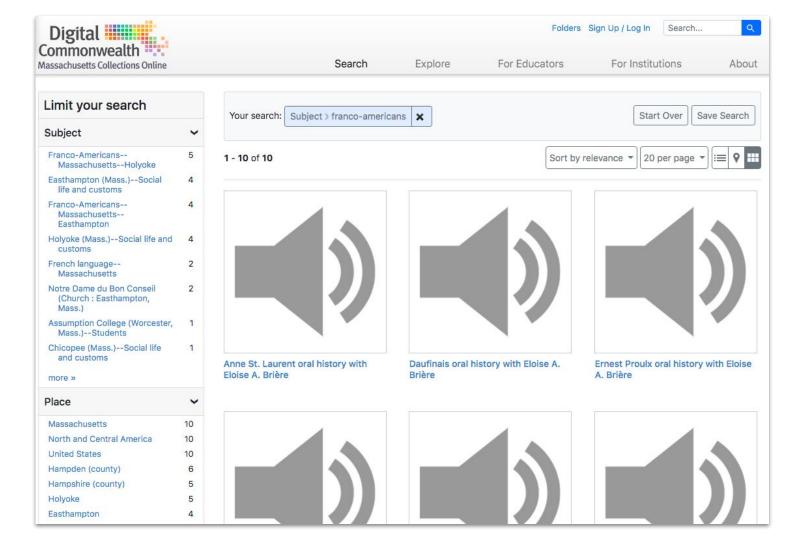
- Inaccurate and Inadequate Description of Materials
- Institutional, Geographic, and Digital Barriers to Discovery of Materials

Inaccurate and Inadequate Description

LCSH: The term "Franco-Americans" was designated a Library of Congress subject heading only in 2008, nearly 80 years after the Johnson-Reed Act essentially closed the border to new migrants.

In terms of organization and access, libraries are sites constructed by the disciplinary power of language...The idea that language has meaning only in context, an idea articulated abstractly in fields like philosophy, comparative literature, and anthropology, was made very materially evident: subject headings, often cast by catalogers as a kind of pure, objective language, are not; where and when and by whom subject headings are used makes all the difference in terms of meaning...In both their activism and their scholarship, librarians have convincingly made the case that Library of Congress Classification (LCC) and Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) fail to accurately and respectfully organize library materials about social groups and identities that lack social and political power ("Queering the Catalog: Queer Theory and the Politics of Correction," Drabinski, 95)







Search

Antislavery movements United States	32
Sacco-Vanzetti Trial, Dedham, Mass., 1921	11
Sacco, Nicola, 1891-1927	8
Vanzetti, Bartolomeo, 1888- 1927	8
International Young Men's Christian Association	7
Posters	7
World War, 1914-1918	7
Antislavery movements United StatesHistory- -19th century	5

8 8 7

more »

Holyoke

more »

North and Central America 55 United States 55 Massachusetts 50 Boston 32 Suffolk (county) 32 Hampden (county) 6 Hampshire (county) 5

Format

Newspapers 28

Documents 17

Manuscripts 14

« Prev. | 1 - 20 of 96 | Next »



Court Chapleau, No. 10, Franco-American Foresters



Franco American Food Company's



Search





« Prev. | 1 - 20 of 33 | Next »

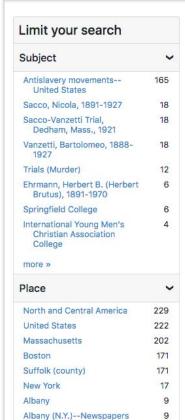


Court Chapleau, No. 10, Franco-American Foresters





Search Explore For



more »



« Prev. | 1 - 20 of 270 | Next »



French-Canadian family

Format: Photogi
Collection: Lawrence
Date: [ca. 186

Institution: Lawrence



Centralville Area - Frenc

Creator: Hengen
Format: Docume

Collection: Lowell N Survey

Date: 1981
Institution: Univers



Limit your search Subject Easthampton (Mass.)--Social life and customs Franco-Americans--Massachusetts--Easthampton French language--Massachusetts--Easthampton Hampton Speciality Company --Employees Town Infirmary (Easthampton, Mass.)--Employees Place Easthampton Hampshire (county) Massachusetts North and Central America United States **Format** Audio recordings (nonmusical) Date 1982 1

Search Explore "french canadian" AND "franco american" earch to canada or france or french or francis or frances 1 entry found Paul Racine oral hist Rac Creator: Format: Auc Collection: Elo Col Date: Auc Uni Institution: Col

Institutional, Geographic, and Digital Barriers to Discovery

Example #1: Repository-centric Organization



Shrewsbury

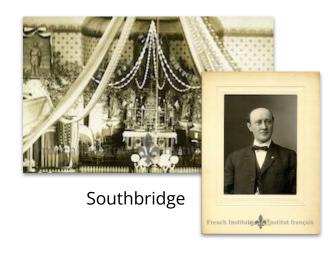


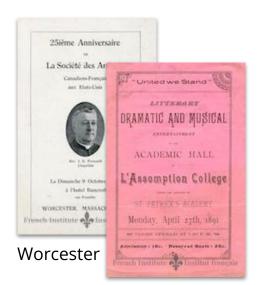
Southeastern MA



South Carver









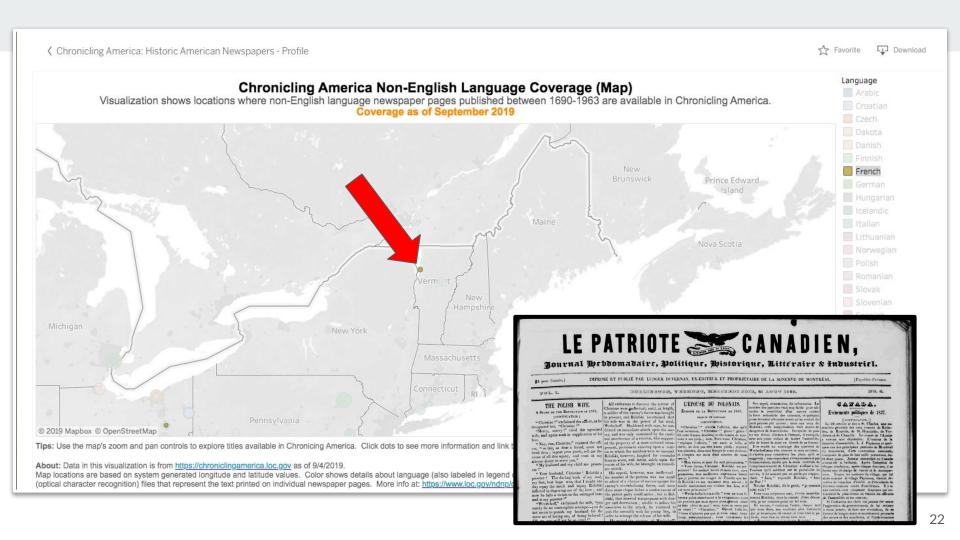


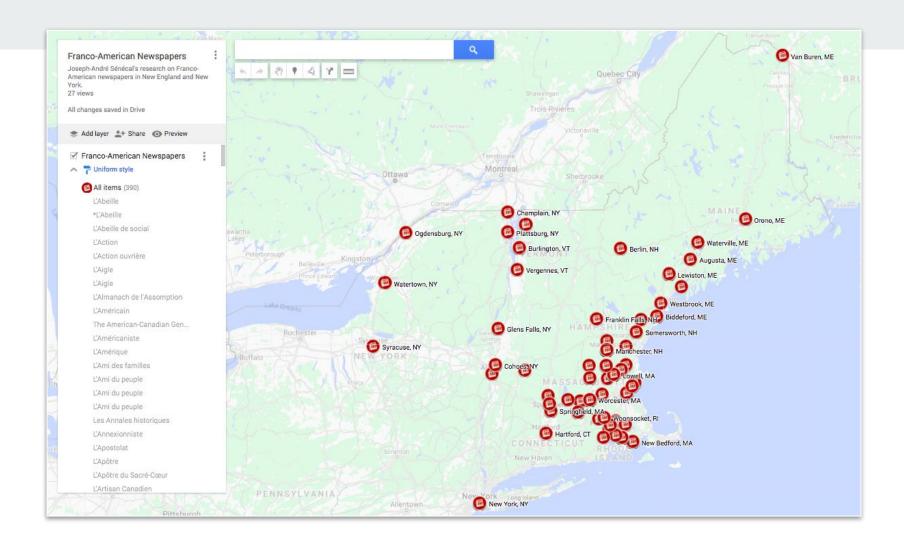
Example #2: State-based organization and funding

NDNP: Through limiting technical, geographic, and funding specifications, the National Digital Newspaper Program has inadvertently constructed barriers to preserving and representing Franco-American newspapers.

The key program for funding historical newspaper digitization in the US, the Library of Congress' and National Endowment for the Humanities' National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) works through state-led, state-limited projects. Yet the NDNP inadvertently constructs barriers to digitizing Franco-American newspapers:

- State with the highest number of Franco-American newspapers (Massachusetts, 197 titles) only just received NDNP funding; .New Hampshire (68 titles) does not received NDNP funding
- NDNP requires that newspapers be digitized from master microfilm.
- Many titles are not held in one state, and many runs are not held where they were published.
- BAnQ holds many master microfilm of Franco-American newspapers, yet BAnQ's work focuses on current-day Quebec, not the publications of their US-based diaspora communities.





Total number of states publishing Franco-American newspapers 7 (ME, NH, VT, MA, CT, RI, NY)

Coverage period of Franco-American newspaper publication 1828-present

Total number of Franco-American newspaper titles ca. 390

Total number of extant Franco newspaper titles ca. 175

Total number of Franco newspaper titles with serial records in Library of Congress's Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers

95

Longest publishing periods for Franco-American newspapers

80 years (*Le Messager*, Lewiston ME)

77 years (*L'Indépendant*, Fall River MA)

75 years (Le Travailleur, Worcester MA)

71 years (*L'Étoile*, Lowell MA)

Most prolific cities publishing Franco-American newspapers

Manchester, NH - 55 titles

Lowell, MA - 37 titles

Worcester, MA - 29 titles

Woonsocket, RI - 26 titles

Example #3: Digital Barriers

a

UMass Amherst Libraries

Special Collections and University Archives ■

Alida Perreault Papers

1906-1957 (*Bulk*:1928-1933) 2 boxes (1 linear ft.) Call no: MS 808

ABOUT SCUA ▼ SCOPE INVENTORY ADMIN INFO DOWNLOAD ▼

Read collection overview

Alida Capistrant was the eleventh of twelve children in a large French-Canadian family in South Hadley, Massachusetts born on July 24,1914. Her parents both immigrated from Québec in 1885. On September 30, 1895 they were married in South Hadley. The Capistrant family rented their home until 1912 when they purchased their first house in South Hadley. Alida had an active social life as a teenager and considered attending college or university, but did not pursue any further education until about 1943, when she studied at the Providence Hospital School of Nursing in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Two years later she married James Perreault and the couple had two children, a daughter, Marcia (Perreault) Matthieu and a son, David James Perreault. They lived in South Hadley until 2003, when they moved to Chandler, Arizona to be near their daughter. Alida Perreault died of complications from Alzheimer's disease on April 7, 2006, and James died in 2008. Both are buried in Saint Rose Cemetery in South Hadley next to Alida's family.

Alida's correspondence during her high school years (1928-1932) reveal a young woman with a substantial network of friends and family. The bulk of the collection consists of letters from several friends, including two potential romantic interests. Letters document daily activities, family happenings, and later Alida's interest in a career as a nurse and her leadership role in the South Hadley Women's Club.

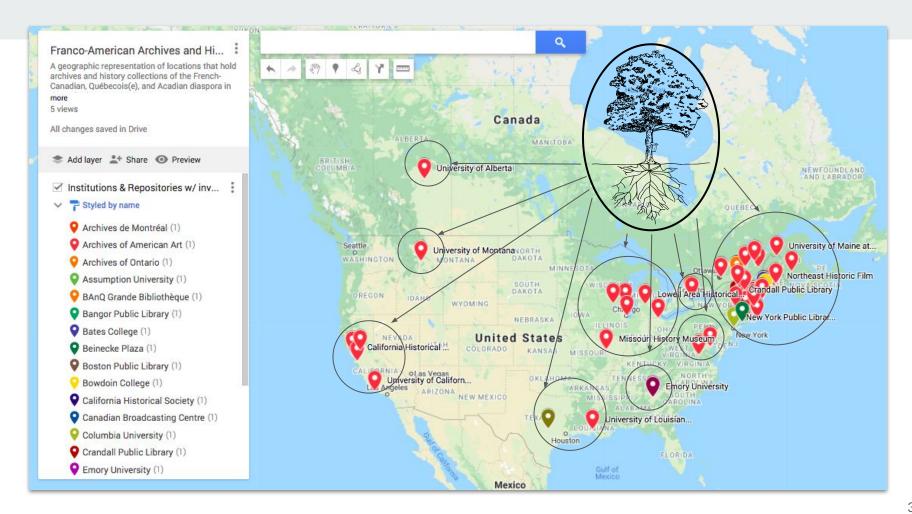
Franco-American Items & Collections

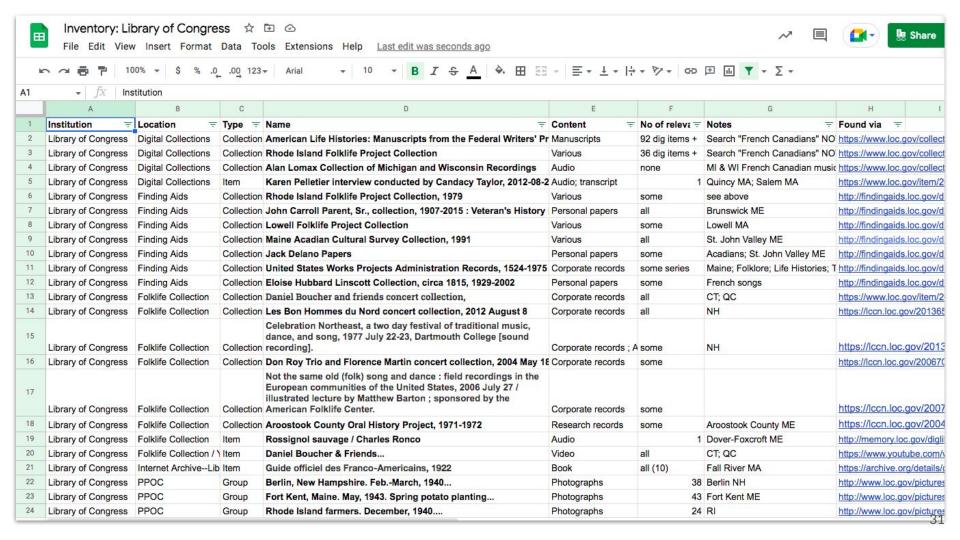
- A. Poulin Papers and BOA Editions Records
 - Yale Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
- American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-40
 Library of Congress
- Edouard Du Buron Papers, 1937-1993
 - Archives of American Art
- <u>Jack Kerouac Collection, 1948-1880</u>
 - Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin
- "Le français dans le Connecticut"
 - CIHM Monograph Collection, University of Alberta Libraries
- Alida Perreault Papers
 - UMass Amherst Libraries Special Collections and University Archives
- Adélard Lambert et ses collectes
 - Répertoire du patrimoine culturel du Québec, Gouv. du Québec

First steps

First, we needed to find the materials. **How to discover them if not by keyword or subject?**

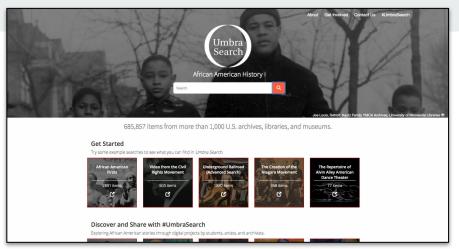
We drew on cultural knowledge in order to find culturally laden signifiers like last names, geography, traditional occupations, language, and community institutions.

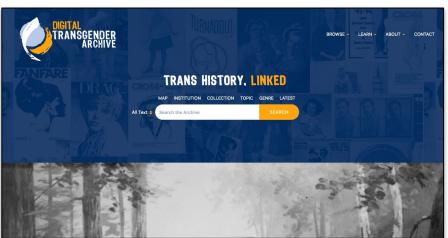


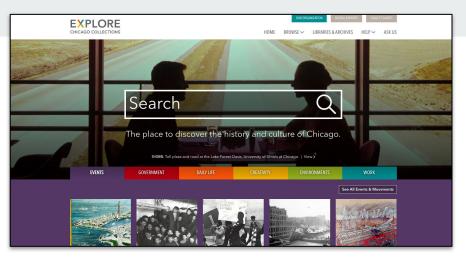


First steps

Second, we needed to think about and find a tool that could help us make these items discoverable.









Language -

LATIN AMERICAN

DIGITAL INITIATIVES

About

Collections

Partners

Search

Resources



The discovery layer that we are building

- Bilingual
- Gateway to multiple institutions and relies upon those institutions for storage
 - "Post-custodialism is a collaborative, non-extractive, mutualistic approach to providing access to archival collections within their original contexts of creation...[and] to support the development of partners' archival capacity... The collections...have been digitized and[/or] described by partner repository staff, who provide the rich contextual knowledge captured in each collection's descriptive metadata. This work is guided by a commitment to nurturing reciprocal relationships between a network of local and international collaborators... to build a horizontal community...connecting partners with one another while decentering our own role." LADI
- Centers Franco American knowledge structures in its finding layer and organization



Selected Facets

Digitization Status

Digitized / Numérisé(e) (180) Not Digitized / Non numérisé(e) (12)

Partially Digitized / En partie numérisé(e) (2)



Letter, 1928 April 2

Letter from Dorilla, Azilda, and Anna Sansoucy, to Antoinette Sansoucy and loseph Lessard.

Date(s)

1928-04-02

Member of

Sansoucy - Harpin Family Archive

Contributing Institution

Assumption University



Topic

Daily Life/Vie quotidienne (129) Family and Home Life/Famille et vie domestique (90)

Education/Éducation (52)

Educators/Professeur(e)s (46)

Sickness/Maladie (39)

Show all



Letter, 1909 December

Letter from Corinne Harpin and Napoleon Sansoucy, to their daughters Antoinette and Anne Marie Sansoucy.

Date(s)

1909-12 (year and month approximate)

Member of

Sansoucy - Harpin Family Archive Contributing Institution Assumption University



Family Name

Sansoucy (93)

Harpin (91)





Letter, 1912 November 20

Letter from Adelard Harpin, to Corinne Harpin.

Date(s)

1912-11-20

Member of

Sansoucy - Harpin Family Archive

Contributing Institution

Assumption University



Contributing Institution

Assumption University (128)
University of Southern Maine (46)
Siena College (5)



Letter, 1913 January 24

Letter from Adelard Harpin, to Napoleon Sansoucy.

Date(s)

1913-01-24

Member of

Sansoucy - Harnin Family Archive

Résumé

État de la numérisation

Digitized / Numérisé(e) (170) Not Digitized / Non numérisé(e) (3)



Letter

Date

1940-08-16

Membre de

Je Me Souviens... I Remember: Presenting and Preserving the Heritage of Upstate New York's Franco-American Communities

Institution contributrice

Siena College



Thème

Daily Life/Vie quotidienne (120) Family and Home Life/Famille et vie domestique (89)

Education/Éducation (46)

Educators/Professeur(e)s (42)

Sickness/Maladie (39)





Letter, 1909 December

Lettre de Corinne Harpin et Napoléon Sansoucy, à leurs filles Antoinette et Anne Marie Sansoucy.

Date

1909-12 (year et month approximate)

Membre de

Sansoucy - Harpin Family Archive

Institution contributrice

Assumption University



Nom de famille





Letter, 1912 November 20

Lettre d'Adélard Harpin, à Corinne Harpin.

Date

1912-11-20

Membre de

Sansoucy - Harpin Family Archive

Institution contributrice

Assumption University



Giguère (42) Afficher tout

Sansoucy (91)

Harpin (90)

Selected Facets

Digitization Status

Digitized / Numérisé(e) (180) Not Digitized / Non numérisé(e) (12)

Partially Digitized / En partie numérisé(e) (2)



Letter, 1928 April 2

Letter from Dorilla, Azilda, and Anna Sansoucy, to Antoinette Sansoucy and Joseph Lessard.

Date(s)

1928-04-02

Member of

Sansoucy - Harpin Family Archive

Contributing Institution

Assumption University



Topic

Daily Life/Vie quotidienne (129) Family and Home Life/Famille et vie domestique (90)

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Member of

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Contributing Institution

Assumption University



Family Name

Sansoucy (93)

Harpin (91)

Choose



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Contributing Institution

Assumption University



Contributing Institution

Assumption University (128) University of Southern Maine (46) Siena College (5)



Letter, 1913 January 24

Letter from Adelard Harpin, to Napoleon Sansoucy.

Date(s)

1913-01-24

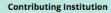
Member of

Sansoury - Harnin Family Archive



Letter, 1912 August 3





Assumption University

View at Contributing Institution

https://library.assumption.edu/french_insti tute/harpin_sansoucy_family

Digitization Status

Digitized / Numérisé(e)







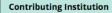


Item Description	
Existence and Location of Originals	French Institute, Assumption University, La Maison 308, Worcester, Massachusetts
Repository	French Institute
Member of	Sansoucy - Harpin Family Archive
Description	Letter from Maria Harpin and Phillippe Sansoucy, to Napoleon Sansoucy.
Genre	correspondence
Author/Creator	Creator (cre): Harpin, Maria Creator (cre): Sansoucy, Philippe
Date(s)	1912-08-03
Source Language	<u>fr</u>
Extent	2 pages



Letter, 1912 August 3





Assumption University

View at Contributing Institution

https://library.assumption.edu/french_insti tute/harpin_sansoucy_family

Digitization Status

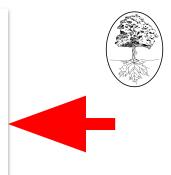
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	Creator (cre): Sansoucy, Philippe
Date(s)	1912-08-03
Source Language	fr.
Extent	2 pages

French Institute Institut français



Letter from Maria Harpin and Philippe Sansoucy, to Napoleon Sansoucy.





St-Ours 3 August 1912

Dear Brother-in-law,

Your letter arrived yesterday, informing us of the relapse of our dear Corine. I was at Pite's [Pierre Sansoucy, brother of Napoleon], in Montreal, when the news arrived and I returned this evening.

Our poor Corine, God has given her her share of suffering. You said on your card that she has improved, but that she was very weak. Evidently, she was not strong in the first place. We think about all of you, Napoleon. It is so sad when the mother is ill.

My dear Antoinette, it is you who has the joy of trying to comfort your mother. I know that she is well off with you. Tell her that if I am well, I will do all I possibly can to go to see her in the fall. Antoinette, tell me if the doctor has said that this hemorrhage could recur. It is so dangerous.

I don't write very long, Rather, I will await news from you, that is, about Corine. Goodnight, my dear ones. I embrace all affectionately, especially our dear Corine. Maria and Philippe Sansoucy

Letter, 9 September 1912

Letter from Adelard Harpin, to Antoinette Sansoucy.

French Institute Institut français



Letter from Maria Harpin and Philippe Sansoucy, to Napoleon Sansoucy.







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Letter, 9 September 1912

Letter from Adelard Harpin, to Antoinette Sansoucy.



EL Our 3 aout 1912. Cher beau freie, Votre lettre was cot parrenu hier hour apprenant la rechute de crotre chère Conne J'élais chez l'ile loraque la rounelle est amirie et je suis revenue que ce sou. Cotte France Come, le fon D'un lui ama bun domie Sa fact de Souffrance Tous disses sur Lote Carte quielle avait This du ming mais qu'elle clait hes faible d'avance. Nous pensons bien & Lour Tous Hapolin, C'est &c histe quand la mire est malade. Ma chere Antoinelle, C'est toi qui a les bonheur dessayer a soulager la mire

Family



A B C D E F G H J K L M N O P Q R S T V W

A

Albert Asselin
Amyot Audette
Ano Authier
Archambault Ayotte

B

Babbie Blais Babineau Blier Baillargeon Boisvert Barrette Boivin Bolduc **Barriault** Bastille **Bonier** Beauchemin Bosse Beaudé Bossé Beaudet Bouchard Beaudry Boucher Beaulé Boucher

Geographic Location

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W

A

Acadia Adams

Albany Albany County Allagash Aroostook County Arthabaska

Assumption Church (Redford)

Auburn Augusta Australia

В

Bangor

Biddeford

Black Brook

Barre
Basilique Sainte-Anne (Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, Québec)
Bath
Bedford

Boston
Brewer
Bridgeport
British Columbia
Brunswick
Burlington

C

California Camden Canada Caraquet Claire Cleveland Cohoes Cohoes Falls

Browse by Topic



The American Experience | Américanité



Arts and Creativity | Arts et créativité



Daily Life | Vie quotidienne



Events | Événements



Language | Langue

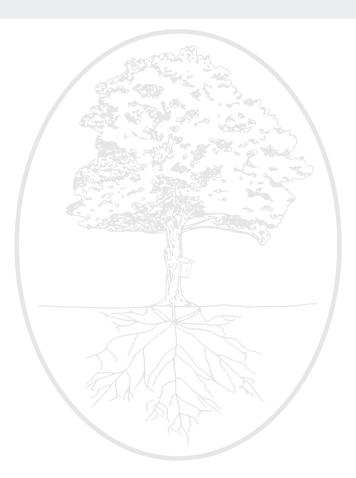


Religion



Work | Travail

Sustainability

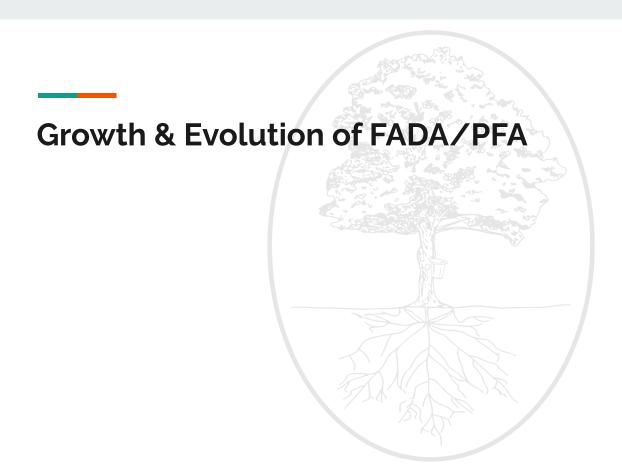


Sustainability

- Consortium
- Fundraising

- Curriculum
- Cataloging
- Post-custodialism

- https://facconsortium.org
- \$2.3 million in grants
- collaborative solicitation
- 2 courses & 4-8 interns per year
- improving descriptive access
 - stewardship & expertise



Growth & Evolution of FADA/PFA

- Teacher guides
- Exhibits
- Digitization
- Accession
- Support
- Contributors
- Outreach

- curriculum integration
- creative outlets
- access & preservation
- 2-3 inquiries per month
 - small institution hosting
- 2-3 institutions per month
- regional promotion

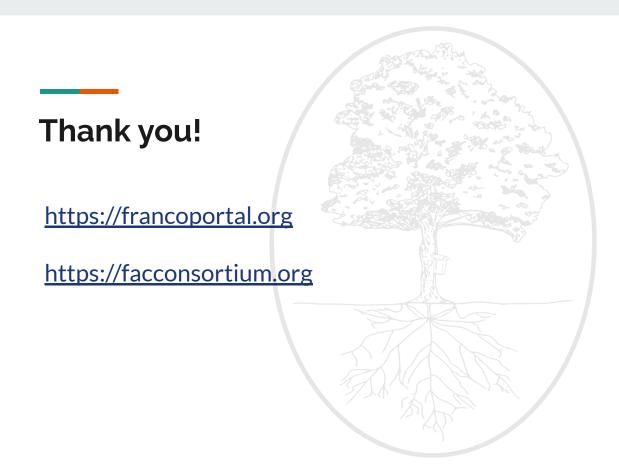
Franco American Collections Consortium

Purpose

Franco American Collections Consortium is a collaboration of universities, archives, and centers that maintain vital collections of books, documents, photos, oral histories, art, maps and artifacts related to French-Canadian and Acadian heritage communities. We collaborate to unite resources, create educational materials, provide leadership, and promote Franco American literacy among researchers, academics, the general public, and Franco Americans themselves.

Mission & Vision

Franco American Collections Consortium works together to make accessible the history and culture of Franco Americans in the Northeast and beyond. Together, we keep Franco American history and culture alive.



Works Cited

- Slide 2 Franco American Collections Consortium. "Home." *Franco American Digital Archives/Portail franco-américain.* https://francoportal.org. Accessed 1 May 2022.
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- Slide 6 See Pinette, Susan, "The French people of Maine: Who are they and how did they get here?" Unpublished presentation. 2021.
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Presentation Title

Franco American Digital Archives/Portail franco-américain: Centering Franco-American Communities in Digital Discovery

Presentation Abstract

During this presentation, we will introduce FADA/PFA to the Digital Commonwealth community and outline its collaborative efforts to center Franco-American community researchers and overlooked archival materials within the digital archives landscape. We will outline our multi-year collaboration to conceptualize a multi-institutional portal; identify and aggregate overlooked collections from over 75 North American institutions; build contributing partnerships; transform and translate metadata with culturally specific markers; fundraise; and build a sustainable, post-custodial, bilingual digital system–all within the context of COVID-19 shutdowns and distancing. We will detail how the portal and consortium pay particular attention to culturally-specific knowledge construction, "centering" Franco-American communities and local knowledge within practices of information organization and archival description. We will also discuss our aims to grow and evolve the portal and consortium to raise awareness of this historically underserved cultural and language community, with collaborating institutions and team members spread throughout the United States and Canada.