

Opening of Public Access to “Digitizing Local History Sources”

Long Island University is pleased to announce the opening of public access to “Digitizing Local History Sources,” a five-year project funded by a \$1.5 million grant from the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation.

Since 2017, 105 master’s and Ph.D. students from the Palmer School of Library and Information Science have digitized primary sources held by local historical societies in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. In this initial release, the public now has access to over 51,000 images—totaling 3,200 gigabytes—from 40 participating historical societies.

The Web address for the site is: <https://liu.access.preservica.com/> The site can be accessed from computers, smart phones, and other mobile devices.

“Long Island’s historical societies’ archival collections are among their most valuable assets. RDLGF’s partnership with the LIU Palmer School of Library and Information Science offers students hands-on archival training while introducing our historic stewards to the best practices in handling and accessing their incredible resources. Having these collections available on line will now easily expand research capabilities into Long Island’s rich heritage,” said Kathryn M. Curran, Executive Director of the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation.

The collection documents the breadth of life on Long Island: from the diary of a 1920s schoolgirl to the daily calendar of a World War II school superintendent; from the daily account book of an 18th century blacksmith to advertising scrapbooks from the quintessential Long Island department store; from 17th century deeds to 20th century real estate agent records; from photos of early 1900s automobile races to scrapbooks documenting the destruction caused by the Hurricane of 1938; and from the daily life of wealthy Gold Coast residents to the treasured photo albums of Fire Island community members.

We will continue to add to the collection and enhance search and discovery. In the meantime, the following are some suggested search terms for beginning to explore “Digitizing Local History Sources.”

Search Term	Result
Whaling	3 journals from whaling ships
Girl	Multi-volume handwritten diary of a high school girl, 1923-1927
Automobile racing	Photo albums of races by William K. Vanderbilt II
Hurricane	Photo album and scrapbook of the Hurricane of 1938
Blacksmith	Blacksmith shop ledgers, 1900-1924
Land	18 th century deeds and other items
Postcard	Hundreds of images of postcards from across Long Island
Club	Over 1,800 images relating to clubs of various kinds
Family	Over 4,000 images related to families

Glass Plate	Over 1,100 glass plate negatives
Landscape	Over 1,000 images of landscapes, sketches, and notes
House	Over 1,600 images related to houses and housing
Dog	46 images with dogs

For additional information, please contact the Project Director, Dr. Gregory S. Hunter, at the Palmer School: greg.hunter@liu.edu