



Redesigning Historypin for Open-Source Digital Humanities

Final Report for Grant HAA-266562-19, Level I Digital Humanities Advancement Grant from National Endowment for the Humanities, Office of Digital Humanities



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

historypin

SHiFT
Collective
equity by design

Executive Summary

In 2019, we were privileged to receive a Level I Digital Humanities Advancement Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Office of Digital Humanities, to take a step back with the 10 year old Historypin project. Together with a panel of esteemed colleagues including digital humanities scholars, community organizers, technologists, historians and other key users of the Historypin platform, we were able to assess some of the primary current and future needs and begin to plan for the next big iteration.

The documentation contained in this public white paper is intended to give an overview of the work conducted during this research and planning phase as well as layout a proposed direction moving forward. Thanks to the enormous amount of work that went into this collaborative effort, it's not difficult to summarize where the project is going.

Today, the Historypin platform is free (though funded projects have advanced functionality), user friendly, accessible online and open to scholars, community groups, digital humanities classrooms, and the general public. The site is used extensively by digital humanities scholars in universities and at large for research and documentation of historical sites, cultural geography, urban planning, geographical study of literature, and many more topics. The platform is routinely listed as a free resource in guides of digital humanities tools published by university libraries, and is used widely in university classes, library and information studies programs, and by individual scholars.

Since 2009, the website has attracted over 98,000 registered users around the world, over 4,000 of which are cultural heritage organizations, and over 34,000 unique collections have been created. The Historypin project has generated over \$7 million in investments to humanities research and community history projects globally. Major funded partnerships have included Stanford University, the BBC, American Experience, the US National Archives and Records Administration, the National Library of Colombia, and many more. While the site is used globally, about a third of our users are in the United States, where this project has focused.

Our project objectives for this phase of work were:

- Better understand the digital humanities scholars' current use of Historypin.
- Document the general needs of a Digital Humanities Scholar from a user-interaction (UX)/ user-interface (UI) perspective.
- Develop a revised and simplified design for the Historypin website
- Draft a plan for a transition to an open-source codebase that increases access to a digital humanities product suite.

The exhaustive research and analysis based on those objectives and included in this report allowed us to focus on the needs of these key users and to zoom in on 5 particular areas that can be addressed through design improvements. These include:

- Interface design
- Interaction and flow

- Feedback Loops
- Responsive Design
- Improvements to the browsing experience

These top-level observations, along with user personas and user journeys based on deep-dive research with our Advisory Panel of core users, were used to explore new user-interface designs and possible improvements in user experience. Our Advisory Panel reviewed the new designs and a final version of design sketches was completed for this phase of work that could in turn inform necessary data architecture changes and allow for pricing for an implementation phase (see the Level III proposed scope of work).

Alongside the user interface and user interaction research, we also conducted a code audit to get a better sense of the current state of the Historypin codebase and begin to further map out a path toward publishing the codebase as open source. That work, conducted by outside consultant AVP, not only updated documentation on the codebase, but also provided an analysis of strengths, weaknesses and key risks and vulnerabilities in the current configuration. We have chosen not to publish these reports in full due to potential security risk, but the analysis has been a critically important element in drafting a blueprint for the next phase of work and moving to publishing the next iteration of the code base as open source.

There are many people to thank for their work and contribution to this effort, and we have some space to do so in depth below. But this work would not have been possible without Hali Dardar, who envisioned this project and served as Project Director through January 2020. Alexandra Dolan-Mescal then took up the reins as Project Director and her unique expertise helped us get the most out of the amazing team of colleagues, contributors and consultants that put so much time and effort into this project. It is yet another reminder of how important the Historypin platform has been to so many, and we hope it will continue to be so in the future.

Jon Voss
Strategic Partnerships Director for Historypin and Co-Founder of Shift Collective
November 30, 2020

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Participants

This collaborative work has relied on the effort of many people--those formally involved are listed below. We also had support from Shift Collective co-founders Bergis Jules and Lynette Johnson, and input from the board of Shift Design, Inc, especially Nick Stanhope, who was on the founding team of Historypin when it was originally a project of Shift in the UK.

Project Team

Project Director - Hali Dardar, (formerly)Shift Collective

Grant Supervisor - Jon Voss, Shift Collective

User Analyst and User Experience Designer, and Project Director - Alexandra Dolan-Mescal, (formerly) Shift Collective

Digital Humanities Advisory Council

The Digital Humanities Advisory Council consists of scholars engaged in humanities research (community organized, academic, or business) currently using, or interested in, Historypin as a platform for their work. They were selected by scanning the current Historypin user base. All members of the Advisory Panel listed below have agreed to the terms of the project. All members have submitted letters of support and CVs (see Appendix).

Brandon Lundsford, University Archivist and Digital Manager at Johnson C. Smith University

Michelle G. Magalong, PhD, Executive Director at Asian & Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation

Mike Mcusic, Technical Writer

David Henry, Head of the Mohistory Lab at Missouri Historical Society

Elizabeth Manley, PhD, Kellogg Endowed Professor in Department of History at Xavier University

Richard Chabran, Adjunct Professor in the School of Information at the University of Arizona, and the Lead at Latino Digital Archives Group

James Morley, Freelance Collections Data Specialist

Tammy Greer, PhD, Director of the Center for American Indian Research and Studies at the University of Southern Mississippi

Jeffery Darrensburg, PhD, Tribal Councilperson of the Atakapa-Ishak Nation, and Chief Editor at Bulbancha is Still a Place

Shane Flores, Research Assistant at Manitos Community Memory Project

Consultants

Lead Developer for Historypin: Alexander Ivanov.

Consultants from AVP have been selected to augment the staff and Advisory Council by providing technical support on the project (see letter of support in appendix).

Open-Source Migration Consultant - Adeel Ahmad, Senior Software Engineer & Architect at AVP

Open-Source Migration Consultant - Bertram Lyons, Senior Consultant at AVP

User Interface Design - Casey Arendt, UX/UI Designer at AVP

About Shift Collective

Historypin is a project of Shift Collective, a non-profit consulting and design group that helps organizations better engage, collaborate with, and reflect their local communities. Based in New Orleans, Louisiana, Shift Collective was launched in 2020 with a refocused mission and governance structure, and still legally operates as Shift Design, Inc, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and Louisiana corporation. The organization was established in 2011 with a specific focus to “support libraries, archives, museums and state and local cultural heritage organizations in efforts to increase access to and discovery of photographic, sound, and video collections.” We are committed to an inclusive record of our shared cultural heritage, and help promote equity in the historical narrative through tools, platforms and field-leading convenings.

Our Methodology

Our community-centered design methodology is geared to help any organization embarking on a project that will impact their local community. It sets out our steps for how to engage, collaborate and co-design programs and projects with people in a local community so that their needs are heard and met. Shift focuses its methodology on applying community-driven design practices to cultural heritage equity initiatives (check out [our case studies](#)), but the guidelines can steer any project where community engagement is desired.

The ultimate goal is that, through collaboration and addressing shared concerns, local needs are accounted for and fulfilled, and organizations and their initiatives matter more to the people in their local community.

Our methodology is comprised of a six-phase process covering about 28 guidelines centered on community input and involvement. These phases and guidelines can be applied sequentially or in any order that suits the project at hand.



The main points are these:

When Shift takes on a project, we start out by learning about the topic or issue, and the community we are about to engage. We think about who is at the center of the project - the people who will be impacted, targeted for engagement, or who are otherwise likely to be invested in the issue. We engage community members to find out what they are already doing (or have already accomplished) around the issue. From there, we confirm that a need exists, and then we listen and learn.

The rest of the process includes phases for planning, design, implementation, reflection and refinement, and the steps needed to accomplish them.

In each case, the desired objective is to use the methodology as a model for community-driven design practices as it relates to an organization's specific project. That model can be applied to similar initiatives or to later stages of the organization's current project.

For this project, we relied on deep-dive interviews with each of the Digital Humanities Advisory Council members individually and in group discussions. User journeys and user personas were developed from these interviews, and design priorities were created and validated by the Advisory

Council before going to wireframes. Initial wireframes were then presented to the Advisory Council before a final iteration was completed.

Project Narrative

Enhancing the Humanities

The Historypin platform is free (though funded projects have advanced functionality), user friendly, accessible online and open to scholars, community groups, digital humanities classrooms, and the general public. The site is used extensively by digital humanities scholars in universities and at large for research and documentation of historical sites, cultural geography, urban planning, geographical study of literature, and many more topics. The platform is routinely listed as a free resource in guides of digital humanities tools published by university libraries, and is used widely in university classes, library and information studies programs, and by individual scholars. Just a few recent examples include Dr. Richard Chabran's [Latin Food Establishments](#) project at Arizona State University, Archivist Brandon Lundsford's [Charlotte's Historic West End](#) map at Johnson C. Smith University, and the [Green Book Project](#) led by Mike Mmusic.

To date, the website has attracted over [98,000 registered users](#) around the world, over 4,000 of which are cultural heritage organizations, and over [34,000 unique collections](#) have been created. Since 2009, the Historypin project has generated over \$7 million in investments to humanities research and community history projects globally. Major funded partnerships have included Stanford University, the BBC, American Experience, the US National Archives and Records Administration, the National Library of Colombia, and many more. While the site is used globally, about a third of our users are in the United States, where this project will focus.

In 2018, we provided services to 1,368 of those US users, and 3,713 users worldwide. Although widely used, the Historypin platform is in need of revitalization. Because they represent some of our most dedicated users, we need to better understand how the site is being used by digital humanities scholars and small cultural heritage organizations so that we may simplify the user interface according to their needs. We suspect this may also highlight the need for increased capability of group use and permissions. Furthermore, the codebase has been upgraded seven times since 2009 and now supports hundreds of thousands of pieces of content. We're at a point where technical analysis will likely highlight opportunities to employ new technologies that will streamline the site and better optimize performance at our current scale.

This project will collaborate with current humanities scholars and practitioners to design a next version of the site that is better adapted to their needs. We approach this by creating a blueprint of an open-source site through a series of Advisory Panel meetings and interviews informed by field expert reports in user needs, interaction design, interface design, and an audit on migrating code to an open-source system. This blueprint will be valuable in redesigning the Historypin site. The twelve month project will identify the salient uses of the tool, refine these for the use of digital humanities scholars, cultural heritage organizations and community-based archives. Our objectives are as follows:

Project Objectives

- Better understand the digital humanities scholars' current use of Historypin.
- Document the general needs of a Digital Humanities Scholar from a user-interaction (UX)/ user-interface (UI) perspective.
- Develop a revised and simplified design for the Historypin website
- Draft a plan for a transition to an open-source codebase that increases access to a digital humanities product suite.

Historypin has a ten year history of serving digital humanities scholars, classrooms, and the general public in creating and sharing narratives through geotagged history. Success of this project will allow us to continue to serve these users with a platform that is mobile friendly and open-source.

Environmental Scan

Historypin works in the field of crowd-sourced humanities, geographic history, and collective narrative. The platform provides a free online database to digitally display historical media on a map. Users sign up for a free account using email, upload digital media (image, audio, text or video) with metadata into their account, assign the media a geographic location, and create, sort, and collaborate on their media and that of other users into topical collections and digital tours of crowd-sourced history, all of which is available online for discovery on Historypin.org as well as through website embeds.

In the ten years since Historypin started, there have been a number of other projects in this space, some commercial, some academic, some non-profit, and many that have already come and go. On the commercial side, WhatWasThere.com is a passion project of web design firm Enlighten Ventures, that seemed to stay focused on individual contributions; Findery.com was started by Caterina Fake of Flickr fame, and their commercial strategy focused on sponsored content but development seems to have stalled out recently; and the ESRI company, home of the ArcGIS mapping platform, has created Story Maps to layer custom data and content layers onto GIS maps, and they've recently been getting more involved in the digital humanities. There are many other commercial history discovery platforms that have not lasted, including Google FieldTrip as perhaps the most notable. Historypin differs from these commercial offerings in a number of ways, the most obvious perhaps that it is a not-for-profit project that does not allow advertising or commercial posts. Also, the bulk of our functionality is free to all users as part of our mission of building community through local history.

Some open-source and non-profit projects we intersect with include Omeka, the open-source content management system for cultural heritage; Mukurty, a free and open-source content management system designed with indigenous communities in mind and known for permissions access; NeatLine, a digital narrative platform for combining time and space; Clio, a website focusing on crowd-sourced and curated history tours; and Curatescape, a web and mobile platform for geographic discovery, built on the Omeka platform. All of these projects have homes or at least started in universities, so most have scholars as their core audience, which is one way we differ from

them. A relative newcomer is [Urban Archive](#), which currently has a focus on New York City and surrounds. We have been in conversation with the creators of all of these projects as our goals are very similar and overlap, and there has been mutual conversation and collaboration throughout. We've been informed by their work and there are elements of overlap in all of our research and development, and we've worked together over the years on topics such as shared data models, application programming interfaces (APIs), and bulk uploads.

Furthermore, there are several ways Historypin differs from or compliments the projects mentioned above. Historypin is designed under social media principles, but is specifically designed to hold humanities content and supports geotagged content with a simple user-interface for content contribution that requires no previous mapping knowledge. Users who may not be interested in diving into GIS systems can quickly create and share content maps on Historypin. Unlike Omeka, Neatline, Mukurtu and Curatescape, the program is fully available online with no downloading required. Historypin differs from Omeka and Mukurtu in that it is not intended to be a preservation or content management system, but rather a tool for discovery and interaction. Historypin is also unique in that all user content is publically available online, with media content licensed however the content owner chooses. The platform is designed to support small research projects, classrooms, and community history collections by providing a simple to use digitizing and collection sharing tool that can assist in developing corpus, and crowdsourcing research topics.

History of the Project

Historypin was created by Shift Foundation (formerly We Are What We Do) in 2009 with a startup grant from Google. The project launched formally in the summer of 2011 at the Museum of the City of New York. While originally targeting individual users as our primary target audience, the site was revised in 2012 to highlight profiles in a way that especially attracted cultural heritage organizations, who used the free site as a way to reach new audiences through geographical discovery of their collections, and exponentially increased the content shared on the site.

Currently the Historypin website receives an average of 5,610 unique visitors a month from the US (14,097 world-wide). Unique visitors has been on a gradual decline since our launch in 2011, when we had an average of 168,625 unique US visitors per month in our first six months, which also coincided with having a publicity firm on retainer. The monthly US average had already dropped to 16,096 in 2012. While we've seen a gradual decline in unique visitors over the years, the visitors we're attracting are staying longer and exploring more, with an average time on page growing from 16 seconds in 2012 to 1 minute and 10 seconds today, and from 2.9 unique pageviews per user in 2012 to 4.9 today. This indicates that we have a niche but more deeply engaged audience today than we did the site launched in 2011.

Historypin has been sustained through a combination of consulting projects and research grants which utilize the platform, ranging from hundreds of dollars to hundreds of thousands of dollars. We anticipate that future support will come from the same sources and that by redesigning the site primarily for humanities scholars, classrooms, and community-based archives we'll be able to

continue to leverage a dependable number of funded projects that keep the primary functionality free for a majority of users. Today the site is maintained in partnership between three non-profit entities worldwide: Historypin Community Interest Company (UK), Shift Foundation (UK), and Shift Design Inc (US). Our strategy is to complete user interaction research and user interface design during this funded phase of work, and then using matching grant or consulting revenue to commission the build and cutover to the next version of Historypin in subsequent months.

Work Plan

(Sept 1, 2019 - Aug 31, 2020)

This project will take place between September 1, 2019 and Aug 31, 2020 (See Project Plan in Appendix), and includes the following milestones:

Package 1 - Analyze user data (Sept - Dec 2019): User researcher will survey Historypin users, analyzing their use of the site through analytics data, surveys, and interviews. This information will be returned to the team in the form of a user report.

Meeting 1 - Present user data to Humanities Advisory Council (January 2020): We will convene the Advisory Panel of digital humanities scholars via video conference and present the user report. Their feedback will ensure the changes we suggest are advancing the capabilities of these humanities practitioners (see sample meeting agenda in Appendix). All meetings will be recorded for documentation.

Package 2 - UX design developed, then presented to Humanities Advisory council (January - May 2020): Based on additional user interaction research with the individual members of the Advisory Panel, a draft interaction design for the new site that incorporates improvements suggested by council will be presented to the council. The goal of this second meeting is to understand the drafted plan, and develop a list of changes to the draft.

Package 3 - UI design developed, then presented to Humanities Advisory council (May - Aug 2020): The user interface designer, in collaboration with UX researcher, will create a draft interface design. The design will be presented to the council for feedback prior to a second iteration of the design.

Package 4 - Tech Audit (Sept - Dec 2020): We will prevent site outdateding in the future by making the site easier to maintain. This project can do this by having tech advisors on the project to consult in the development to ensure the code we use is open-source, written in simple, popular computer languages for easy editing, and designing a financially sustainable system.

Staff: Hali Dardar (Partnership Manager, Shift Design, Inc) will manage the project, produce reports, and coordinate the Advisory Panel. Jon Voss (Director, Shift Design, Inc) will provide strategic oversight and financial management. Alexandra Dolan-Mescal (User Experience Designer, Shift Design, Inc) will conduct user research and create the user experience design. Casey Arendt (UX/UI Designer, AVP) will design the user interface. Bertram Lyons (Senior Consultant, AVP) and Adeel Ahmad (Senior Software Engineer & Architect, AVP) will conduct the code audit.

Project Risks

Success depends on successful council meetings. This includes scheduling meeting times that maximize attendance in our project planning (see Project Plan in Appendix), and developing efficient agendas (see Meeting Agenda in Appendix). The quality of all project packages will be evaluated by

our Advisory Panel in meetings. We will rely on external tech consultants for both UI design and tech audit. The quality of all outcomes will be evaluated by our Digital Humanities Advisory Council, who were selected from the existing Historypin user base.

Impacts

When completed, our grant will have accomplished developing a plan to make Historypin a more effective platform. We will have done this through a democratic process that respects the expertise and needs of the digital humanities scholars who make up our user base. Completing this project will allow us to open-source our code, develop a better tool, and strategize on methods to financially sustain the site to prevent long-term deterioration.

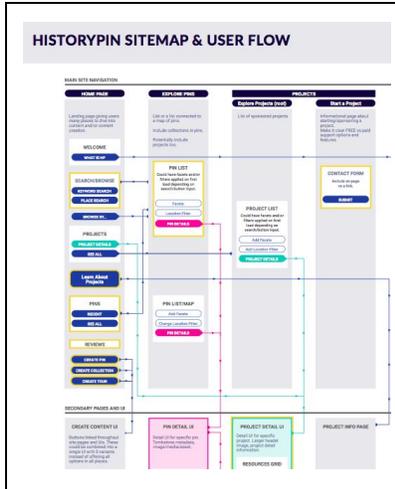
Final Product

Success of this project will lead to a blueprint for revitalization of Historypin. The blueprint will include reports on users, a mobile-first UX wireframe, a user friendly mobile UI template, a set of recordings of digital humanities scholars discussing their UX and UI needs for a webtools design audience, and a tech audit defining the feasibility of self-sustainability in the future.

Level I Key Findings and Summary Documentation

The following is a summary of each of the primary outputs of the Level I project. Because of length, file size, or securities concerns, not all outputs have been attached in the appendices. Both the User Interviews/Personas report and the Historypin Sitemap & User Flow are available upon request.

<p>INDIGENOUS INTERDISCIPLINARY:</p> <p>"IF YOU'RE LOOKING AT A SPECIFIC CULTURE, THINGS CONSIDERED TO BE IN DIFFERENT FIELDS ARE VERY CLOSELY CONNECTED."</p> <p>ANTHROPOLOGY HISTORY EDUCATION</p> <p>ACTIONS: Their ideal project scope for research would be to first collaborate with a bunch of researchers who are all using the same documents. Come together and get consensus on where important places may be. Visit those places and look for artifacts. After, compare any artifacts found in that place with known artifacts from the area that have already been connected with certain cultures to note any overlap.</p> <p>INTERESTS: Community documentation is really difficult to do without paying the community. They want to make sure there is a financial benefit for the people who are involved. Place naming is important to their research.</p> <p>OPINIONS: Any type of work that has to do with tracking the origins of historical people needs to be interdisciplinary work. Small things can happen from single photos. Having a map of a vision can help some of these ideas on larger research manifest because maps are a way to collaborate with people.</p>	<h2>The Humanities Advisory Panel, Deep Dive Interviews, and User Personas (not included in appendices)</h2> <p>In a 36-page report, Project Director Hali Dardar summarized the findings of structured qualitative interviews with the 11 person Humanities Advisory Panel to get a broad understanding of the digital humanities field, and what is important to the Historypin user base within that field. These interviews were analyzed and processed into user personas. The user personas were used to assist the Advisory panel in describing the design principles and core services of the Historypin platform, and what improvements would yield the best results for their needs.</p>
<p>#2 - INTERACTION AND FLOW</p> <p>23%</p> <p>"Simplify navigation of the site and its capabilities"</p> <p>DEFINING PROBLEM: 23% of all weighted comments in the user feedback that could be improved with design interventions described issues with flowing through the website and how one interacts with content, either by viewing it or adding it. Flow is a critical part of a content-driven platform like Historypin. We want to ensure that it is clear how to get from one step to the next, where to find the information a user is seeking, and make sure that every interaction is a click results in expected behavior. Comments suggested that the flow of creating pins, collections, projects, and tours is not intuitive, and that we lose potential users by requiring demonstrations and videos to get started. Currently, actions users take have confusing results, such as seemingly creating multiple pins when creating street views, or not seeing all pins in a collection on the map when visiting a collection. Key principles for designing here are intuitive and clear. Every unexpected interaction makes users think the platform is buggy or that they won't be able to accomplish their goals.</p> <p>SELECTED FEEDBACK: In addition to the pull quote above, the following feedback was ranked most important in the category of interaction and flow: "So many of the existing features are not intuitive and require demonstration." "Allow easy and creative ways to link different projects around the world based on themes." "Improve the street view line-up tool." "Improve navigation. When a user clicks on a pin and its gallery image opens, make it clear how to navigate back to the gallery or map." "Make the map and gallery more interactive, so when a user scrolls the collection, the map zooms to the pins."</p>	<h2>Historypin User Feedback Report</h2> <p>In a 7 page report, Hali Dardar and Alexandra Dolan-Mescal summarized the most relevant and actionable findings from the earlier interviews and subsequent workshops with users. The collection of structured ranked feedback from the Humanities Advisory Panel identified the top issues that need to be addressed in a Historypin redesign. This ranked data was then analyzed to prioritize flows, features, and layouts of wireframe designs, to be created by an external consultant.</p>



Suggested Revised Sitemap and User Flow (Not included in appendices)

Hali Dardar created an existing Sitemap as a launching point for this next phase of work. Casey Arendt (AVP) worked with Hali Dardar and Alexandra Dolan Mescal to utilize the feedback and top issues to identify potential improvements to the Historypin user experience and user interface that would give digital humanities and small cultural heritage organizations better ways to share and explore the site.

```

MySQL v5.7
Grunt (unknown version)

External Dependencies
AWS CDN
Google Cloud Storage
Google Maps
Soundcloud
YouTube
Vimeo

Application Components
Views
app_api/templates/base/cards/person.tpl
app_api/templates/base/cards/place.tpl
app_api/templates/base/cards/project.tpl
app_api/templates/base/dialogs/comment-video.tpl
app_api/templates/base/dialogs/sharing.tpl
app_explore/templates/base/fragments/header.html
app_explore/templates/base/fragments/footer.html

Controllers
application/controllers/default/home.py
application/controllers/default/pages.py
application/controllers/default/projects.py
application/controllers/default/services.py

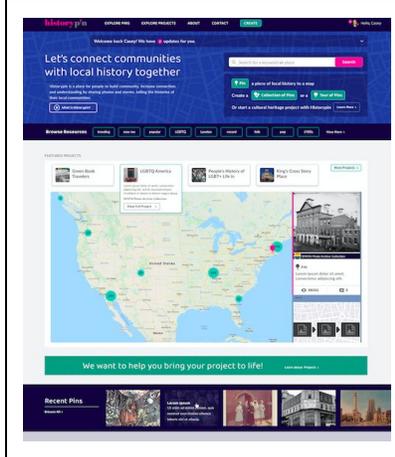
Models (and Data Access)
application/models/sql/collections.py
application/models/sql/homepage.py
application/models/sql/places.py
application/models/sql/projects.py
application/models/sql/stories.py

Code Structure
What follows is an annotated folder-level summary of the codebase.

/app_api
  Mixture of Angular and django serving dynamic content to the website
  lib
    Python libraries including Elasticsearch, BeautifulSoup, QS Parser
  /templates/base
  
```

Codebase Analysis (Not included in appendices)

Senior Software Engineer & Architect Dan Fischer (AVP), and Managing Director of Software Development Bertram Lyons (AVP) conducted code reviews and interviews with the Historypin development team (now at an upkeep and maintenance level) to perform a code audit. This was necessary to understand the current state of the codebase, assess where strategic upgrades to the architecture could yield optimizations and cost savings, and where more recent code libraries could be utilized. They also assessed what would need to happen to publish the codebase as a usable, open source addition to digital humanities developers, in addition to the existing API and bulk upload tools. The three part report included a complete code review, an analysis of strengths/weaknesses/risks, and a bid for two options for upgrading the systems architecture.



Wireframes and new Designs

Finally, Casey Arendt (AVP) worked with the Historypin team to explore new user interaction and user interface possibilities, developing wireframes to be reviewed by the Humanities Advisory Panel. Their reviews indicated where the most important changes responded to their direct needs and those in the digital humanities and small cultural memory organizations. These have been aligned with the most pressing codebase upgrades to create the design and software engineering plan, as well as the Collaborative Humanities Programs that will make the best use of the improved site. A sample of wireframes and new designs are included in the appendices.

Appendices

Appendix A. Historypin User Feedback Report

Appendix B. Wireframes and New Designs

Appendix C. Abstract for Level III Proposal: Historypin for Collaborative Public Humanities Programs

HISTORYPIN USER FEEDBACK REPORT

Grant HAA-266562-19

Redesigning Historypin for Open-Source Digital Humanities

About the User Feedback Report

An activity within the 2020 Phase 2 NEH Digital Advancement grant was the collection of structured ranked feedback from the Historypin advisory committee on the top issues that need to be addressed in a HistoryPin redesign. This ranked data was then analyzed to prioritize flows, features, and layouts of wireframe designs, to be created by an external consultant.

Ranked Feedback's Fit Within Larger Process

This feedback comes after interviews were conducted and personas created as part of Phase 1 of this grant. The results of Phase 1, in addition to the ranked feedback, are being used by an external designer to ensure that new design and flow concepts are aligned with the needs of our user personas and adhere to the process of user-centered design.

Analysis Process

Feedback was solicited within two categories: Core Services and Improvements. Using the reinforcement of core services as background knowledge, the analysis process focussed on categorizing Improvement comments into overarching themes and calculating the importance of addressing the issues based on ranking. The comments in categories that could be improved upon by design changes were then submitted to the designer.

External Consultants

Shift Design has contracted with the team at AVP, specialists in technology projects in the digital humanities, to create wireframes for the Historypin Redesign Project. Having external consultants allows us to get fresh eyes on the project, get an impartial perspective, and bring more voices into the process to ensure a diversity of ideas and approaches are identified and assessed.

Design Improvement Categories

Categories of feedback comments that could be improved by User Experience Design:

- General Interface Design
- Interaction
- Feedback
- Responsive Design
- Browsing

Project Planning Categories

Categories of feedback comments that need to be addressed by other project planning:

- Content
- Connections
- New Features
- Interoperability

#1 - INTERFACE DESIGN

40%

““We need to optimize what the HistoryPin site can do on the first page”

DEFINING PROBLEM:

40% of all weighted comments in the user feedback that could be improved with design interventions were about **interface design**.

The user interface, and in particular the homepage, feel stale to our committee, and look old in comparison to social media platforms that regularly update their look and feel. The homepage also does not clearly show what Historypin does or make it easy for a user to get started.

Another page highlighted in the user feedback is the collection or project landing page, which users want more flexibility with.

The most repeated prescriptive word in the feedback was “**simplify**”. By simplifying the layout, design, and navigation we will be able to more clearly articulate the core services Historypin provides and make it easier to start interacting with the platform.

SELECTED FEEDBACK:

In addition to the pull quote above, the following feedback was ranked most important by users in the category of interface design:

“Construct a more user-friendly interface that more closely resembles current social media platforms.”

“It has to be quicker and simpler to get started.”

“A lot of people don’t do trial and error.”

“We need more of a balance between user participation and expert guidance.”

“It has to be quicker and simpler to add content.”

#2 - INTERACTION AND FLOW

23%

“Simplify navigation of the site and its capabilities”

DEFINING PROBLEM:

23% of all weighted comments in the user feedback that could be improved with design interventions described issues with flowing through the website and how one interacts with content, either by viewing it or adding it.

Flow is a critical part of a content-driven platform like Historypin. We want to ensure that it is clear how to get from one step to the next, where to find the information a user is seeking, and make sure that every **interaction** is a click results in expected behavior.

Comments suggested that the flow of creating pins, collections, projects, and tours is not intuitive, and that we lose potential users by requiring demonstrations and videos to get started.

Currently, actions users take have confusing results, such as seemingly creating multiple pins when creating street views, or not seeing all pins in a collection on the map when visiting a collection. Key principles for designing here and **intuitive** and **clear**. Every unexpected interaction makes users think the platform is buggy or that they won't be able to accomplish their goals.

SELECTED FEEDBACK:

In addition to the pull quote above, the following feedback was ranked most important in the category of interaction and flow:

“So many of the existing features are not intuitive and require demonstration.”

“Allow easy and creative ways to link different projects around the world based on themes.”

“Improve the street view line-up tool.”

“Improve navigation. When a user clicks on a pin and its gallery image opens, make it clear how to navigate back to the gallery or map.”

“Make the map and gallery more interactive, so when a user scrolls the collection, the map zooms to the pins.”

#3 - FEEDBACK LOOPS

16%

“Create incentives...so that there is feedback and a hook to keep pinning and exploring.”

DEFINING PROBLEM:

16% of all weighted comments in the user feedback that could be improved with design interventions were requests for **feedback loops**.

Feedback encourages continued use of the website, reminds users about their content on Historypin, and allows them to see how others interact with their content. All of this increases a sense of the platform as place, as community, which is part of the core service HistoryPin is trying to provide.

Many of these comments are interlaced with enhancing mobile design and creating new features related to augmented reality or using Historypin while “on location” out in the world.

Notifications, badges, emails, and more. There are plenty of data-proven ways to increase feedback loops and social activity websites, and we will design for them.

SELECTED FEEDBACK:

In addition to the pull quote above, the following feedback was ranked most important by users in the category of feedback loops:

“Send prompts to remind folks to use the site.”

“A better ‘here’s what is around me’ experience (which could include AR, but doesn’t have to), especially on mobile.”

“Increase real time / real place interaction either by app or alerts.”

“I want my community to have information markers, but there are none physically.”

#4 RESPONSIVE DESIGN

14%

“Improve the mobile user experience!”

DEFINING PROBLEM:

14% of all weighted comments in the user feedback that could be improved with design interventions were about improving the **mobile experience**, specifically with **responsive design**.

Historypin has tried building a separate mobile application in the past, but does not have the funding or development staff to maintain two separate platforms. Additionally, the general trend in technology is a move away from separate applications and instead focusing on making websites with “mobile-first” design, ensuring that anything a user can do on a desktop they can also do from their phones.

Responsive design for Historypin goes hand in hand with **new feature requests** for augmented reality and on-site notifications and feedback. By getting our mobile experience right, we will open up the doors to enticing immersive opportunities.

SELECTED FEEDBACK:

In addition to the pull quote above, the following feedback was ranked most important by users in the responsive design category:

“All Historypin functions need to work easily and effectively on all mobile devices, including zooming maps in/out, navigation between pins, operation of fade-in/out photo overlays, and the ability to add comments to a pin”

“Develop a mobile-friendly or app based interface that can be used by students or in “on-the-go” settings.”

“I want to be able to use the phone to make a pin where you are.”

#5 - BROWSING

11%

“Create easier to find ‘windows’ into content - curated, discrete, rich, themed”

DEFINING PROBLEM:

11% of all weighted comments in the user feedback that could be improved with design interventions were about **browsing** and **searching** for content on the platform.

Historypin has a lot of content. Much of it is high quality, but there is also a lot of low-value content created by users testing out the platform. At the moment, the homepage only shows a small subset of collections, the homepage search only searches locations, and tags, while used on content, are not displayed in a browsable way.

Creating new facets for searching and browsing increases the overall user experience, will bring high-value content to light, and will highlight new avenues of inquiry into the rich content we have while also allowing for more management of low quality content. The data is already there, we just need to display it better!

SELECTED FEEDBACK:

In addition to the pull quote above, the following feedback was ranked most important by users for browsing and searching:

“Develop high level categories that allow similar projects to see each other or users to see the relations”

“Construct a more robust and thorough search tool to allow for better out-sharing of information; perhaps also a randomized list of pop-up “suggested” sites to look at based on user history.”

“Improve the search functions.”

“Enable browsing/searching by linked data.”

NON-DESIGN CATEGORIES FOR INTERVENTION

Redesigning HistoryPin is more than rethinking the interface and building functionality. With our Core Services in mind, we must also re-design our methodologies for interacting with communities, developing content, and funding our work.

Historypin is an online platform, which needs to be continually technically maintained and updated to stay relevant. But it was always designed to be more than a content-driven website. We are a non-profit organization, a community of activists, educators, historians, archivists, do-gooders, artists, and more.

Some of the work we need to do to make Historypin of value to our user community goes beyond website design interventions. We are working throughout this grant period to re-think how we approach our core services and how we can make HistoryPin sustainable, useful, supportive, and worthwhile for our various constituencies.

Here are the the user feedback categories for non-design interventions:

- Content
- Connections
- New Features
- Interoperability

We thank you all for your insightful comments, your energy to push us to get to a better place, and the time you have given to the committee. We look forward to growing into the platform and community you need to support you!

In no particular order, here are some of the non-design comments we are keeping in mind as we plan for the future of Historypin:

“Show how to develop little doable projects and how they could work.”

“Get permission to use older maps and pin onto those... overlay maps.”

“How do we give people the power to define their own narrative?”

“Build out a series of resources for educators seeking to use History Pin in the classroom”

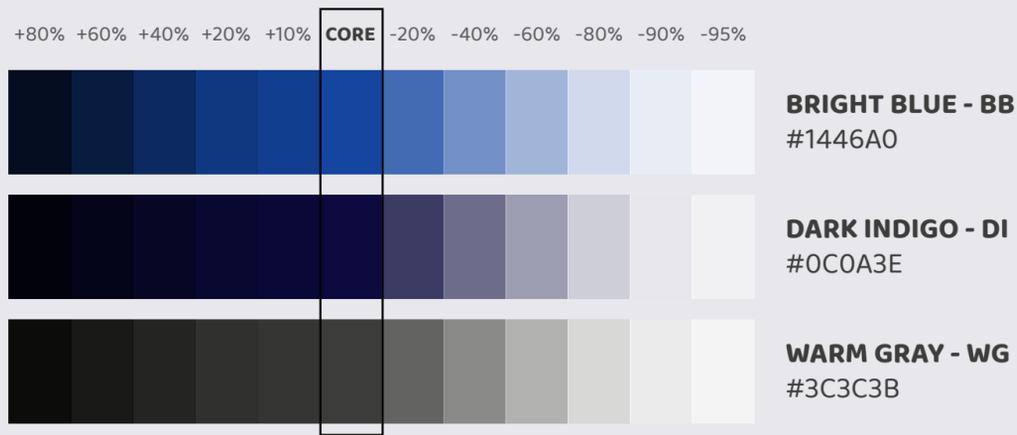
“Grants for marginalized communities (neighborhood, students, organizations) to expand that wider audience.”

“Add tools to easily capture a person’s story when creating a pin.”

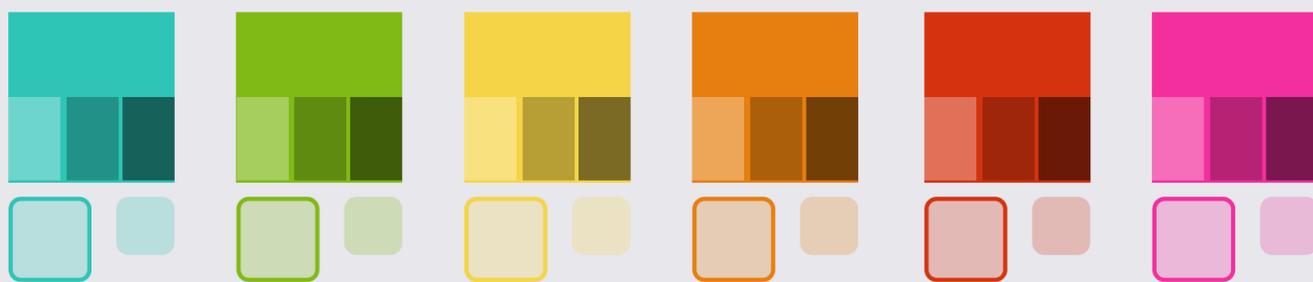
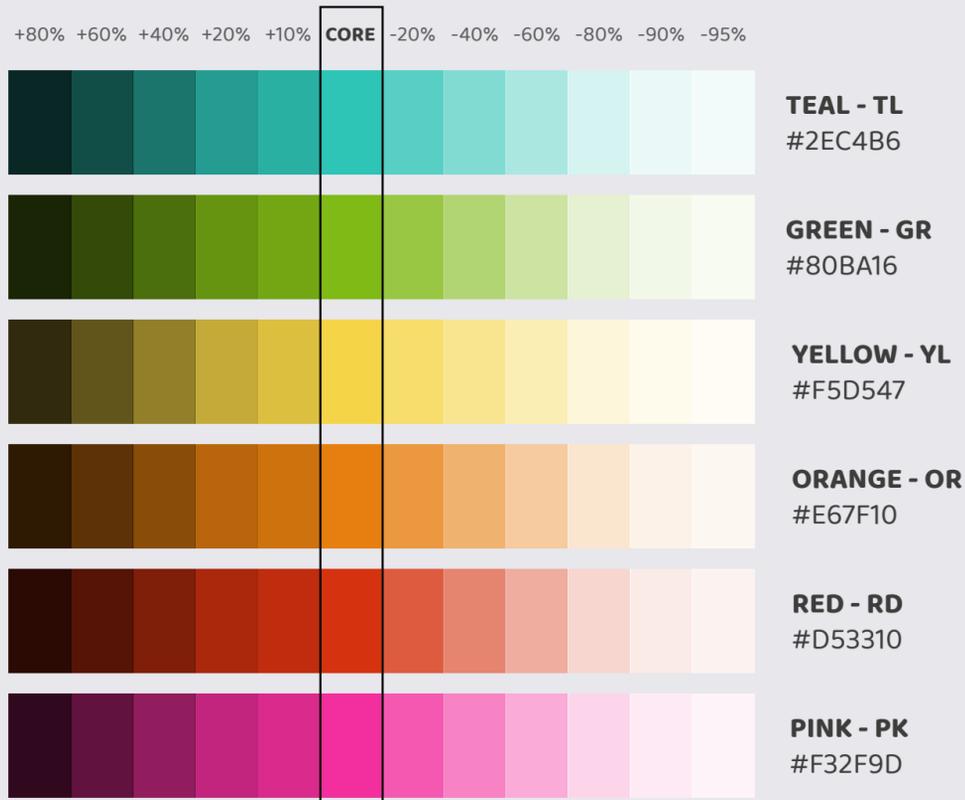
STYLES

EXPANDED COLOR PALETTE

Non Interactive Nuetrals



Interactive and Alert Accents



NEW ACCENT GOOGLE FONT

Baloo 2 — Regular

Baloo 2 — Semibold

Baloo 2 — Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

'?!"!(%)[#]{@}/&\<-+÷×=>®©\$€£¥¢::,,.

CONSISTENT UI



HOME / GLOBAL

Welcome back Casey! We have 2 updates for you.

Let's connect communities with local history together

Historypin is a place for people to build community, increase connection, and understanding by sharing photos and stories, telling the histories of their local communities.

What is Historypin?

Search for a keyword or place

Search

Pin a piece of local history to a map

Create a Collection of Pins or a Tour of Pins

Or start a cultural heritage project with Historypin Learn More

Browse Resources

trending

near me

popular

LGBTQ

London

record

folk

pop

1980s

View More

FEATURED PROJECTS



Green Book Travelers



LGBTQ America

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SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

View Full Project



People's History of LGBT+ Life in



King's Cross Story Place

More Projects

The map shows several pins with numbers: 2 (Vancouver), 25 (Portland), 218 (San Diego), 53 (Phoenix), 264 (Nashville), 22 (Jacksonville), and 524 (New York). Project thumbnails include 'Green Book Travelers', 'LGBTQ America', 'People's History of LGBT+ Life in', and 'King's Cross Story Place'. A detailed view of a pin shows a photo of a building, the text 'SFMTA Photo Archive Collection', a 'PIN' icon, a description 'Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.', a count of '39202' views, and '5' comments.

We want to help you bring your project to life!

Learn about Projects

Recent Pins

Browse All



Lorem Ipsum

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We love our users!

Leave a Comment

historypin

Connecting communities with local history



Community

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Local History

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Cultural Stories

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

CONTACT US

hello@historypin.org

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- News
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- Speaking
- Team

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- FAQ
- Getting Started
- Tutorials
- Community Forum

Subscribe to Historypin newsletter

Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia

Enter an email address

Subscribe

Welcome back Casey! We have 2 updates for you. 

Your resources have been viewed 183 times this week! See more stats on your dashboard... 

13 of your pins have been repinned to other member's collections! 

Let's connect communities with local history together

Historypin is a place for people to build community, increase connection, and understanding by sharing photos and stories, telling the histories of their local communities.

 [What is Historypin?](#)

[Search](#)

 [Pin](#) a piece of local history to a map

Create a [Collection of Pins](#) or a [Tour of Pins](#)

Or start a cultural heritage project with Historypin [Learn More >](#)

Search

- Welcome back Casey!
We have 2 updates for you. ▼
- Someone pinned something near your pin ➤
- 13 of your pins have been repinned to other member's collections! ➤

Let's connect communities with local history together

Historypin is a place for people to build community, increase connection, and understanding by sharing photos and stories, telling the histories of their local communities.

[▶ What is Historypin?](#)

 **Pin** a piece of local history to a map

Use pins to create a

 **Collection** or a  **Tour**

Start a heritage project [Learn More >](#)

Browse Resources View More >

- trending
- near me
- popular
- LGBTQ

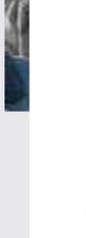
PROJECTS View More >



 **SFMTA Photo Archive Collection**

Green Book Travelers

Historypin is a place for people to share photos and stories, telling the histories of their local communities.



 **P**

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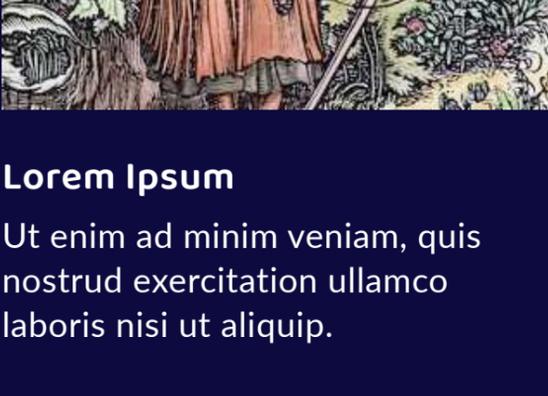
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s

We want to help you bring your project to life!

[Learn about Projects >](#)

Recent Pins Browse All >



Lorem Ipsum

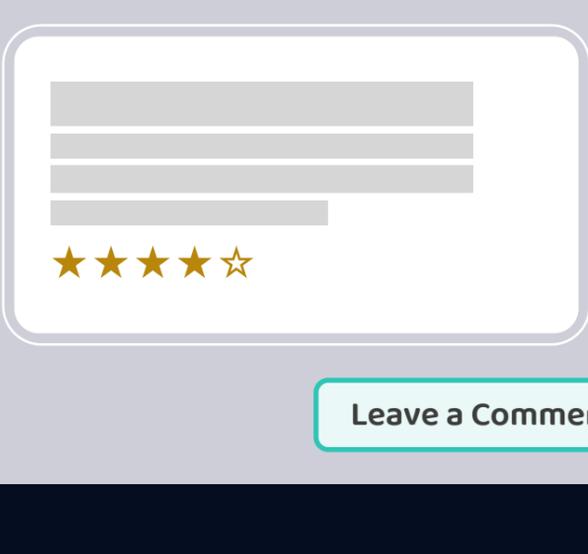
Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip.



Lorem Ipsum

Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip.

We love our users!



★★★★☆

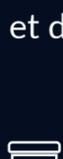


★

[Leave a Comment >](#)

historypin

Connecting communities with local history

-  **Community**
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.
-  **Local History**
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.
-  **Cultural Stories**
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

CONTACT US

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- Team

HISTORYPIN HELP

- FAQ
- Getting Started
- Tutorials
- Community Forum

Subscribe to Historypin newsletter

Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia

 Subscribe

CONTENT BROWSING

circus near Madison, WI

Search

FILTERS

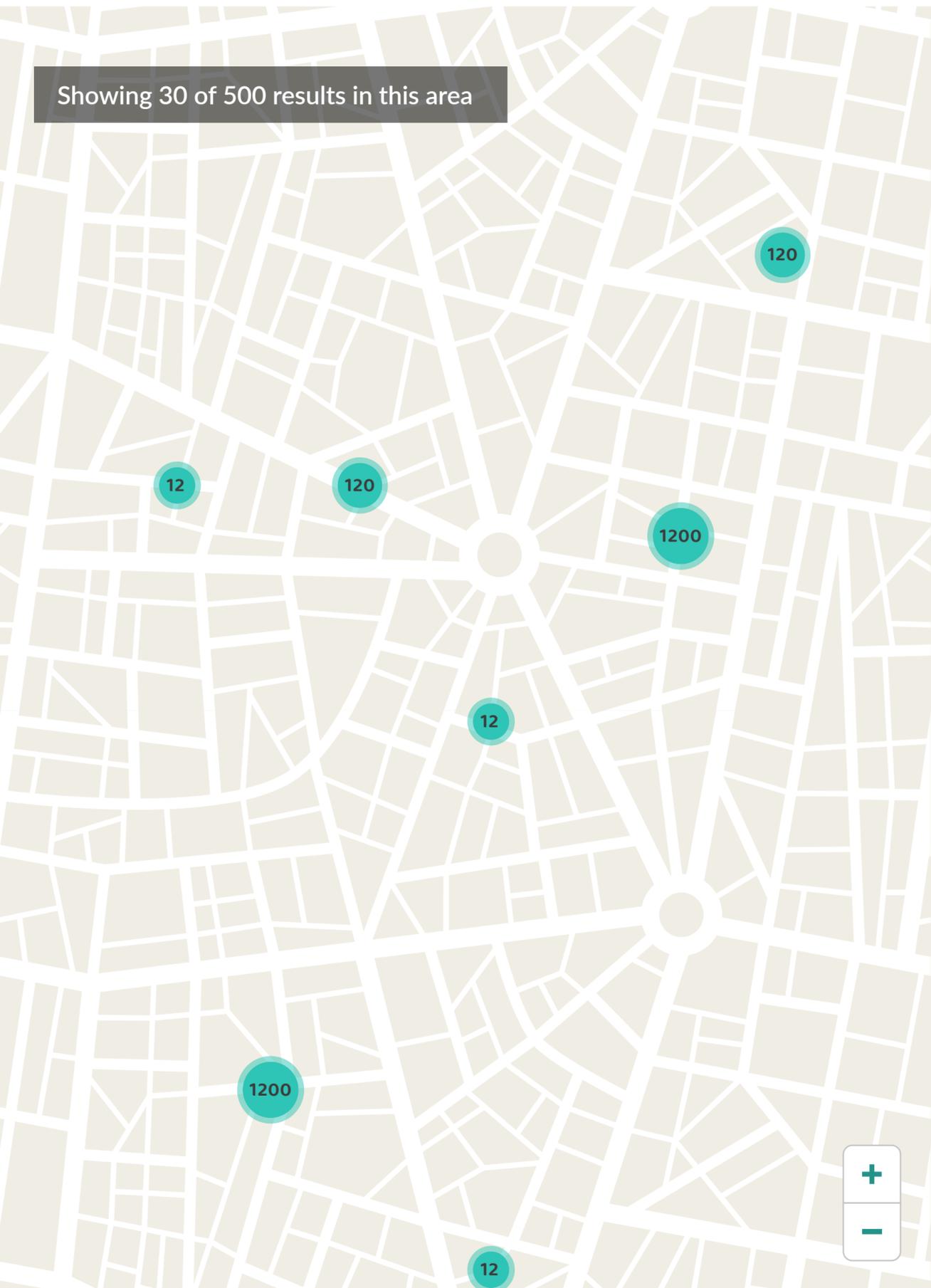
Type: Tours & Collections

Dates: 1000–Present

Dates: 1000–Present

Sort: Most Recent

Showing 30 of 500 results in this area




SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

PIN
Fishing boat launch at Fisherman's Wharf, 1920s

39202 | 5



SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

COLLECTION
SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

39202






SFMTA Photo Archive Collection





PINNED BY: <USER NAME>

COMMENTS & STORIES



<COMMENTS NAME> <COMMENTS DATE>

This is a great comment about a great piece of content!



<COMMENTS NAME> <COMMENTS DATE>

Share your thoughts. Feel free to include links to videos, sounds, or webpages; or share a video comment...

Upload a Video Comment

Submit

INCLUDED IN

COUNTRY
United Kingdom

CITY
London

DISTRICT
Islington



<project manager>

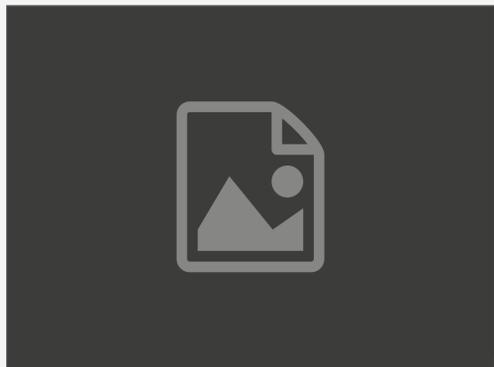
PROJECT

Mapping Magic

2365

123

43

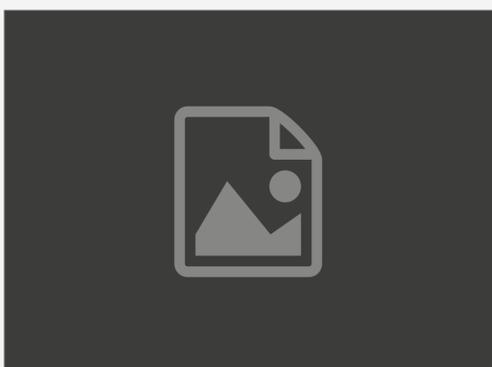


SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

COLLECTION

SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

39202



SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

COLLECTION

SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

39202



SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

TOUR

A Selection of Bernal Heights photos

39202

5

Wrong Turn

1921. "Auto wreck." Vehicular mishap on a wintry day on the streets (and sidewalks) of Washington, D.C. National Photo Company.

PIN

SHARE

LIKE

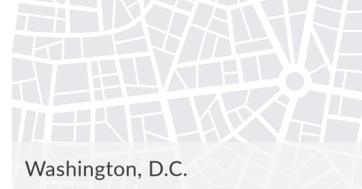
DATE

Suggest a better date

2017

LOCATION

Suggest a better location



Washington, D.C.

TAGS

Add a tag...

Submit

posters

movements

street

history

word

posters

METADATA

Licence: None

Attribution: Bernard Hodson, Martyn Bundy

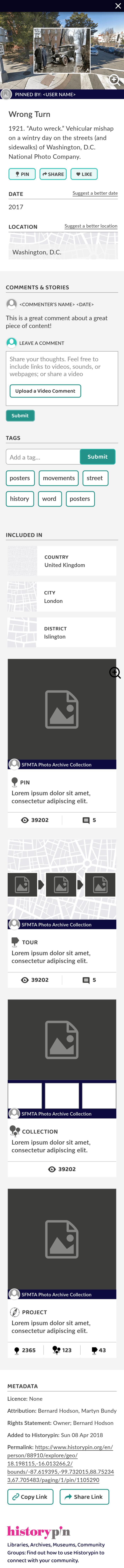
Rights Statement: Owner; Bernard Hodson

Added to Historypin: Sun 08 Apr 2018

Permalink: <https://www.historypin.org/en/person/88910/explore/geo/18.198115,-16.013266,2/18.198115,-16.013266,2/bounds/-87.619395,-99.732015,88.752343,67.705483/paging/1/pin/1105290>

Copy Link

Share Link



PINNED BY: <USER NAME>

Wrong Turn

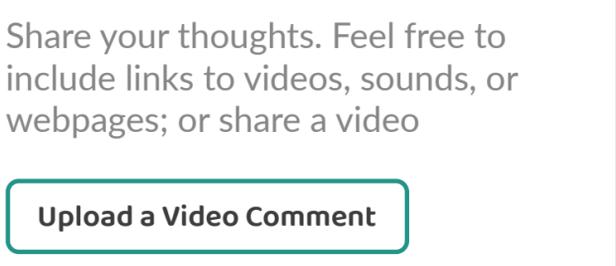
1921. "Auto wreck." Vehicular mishap on a wintry day on the streets (and sidewalks) of Washington, D.C. National Photo Company.

PIN **SHARE** **LIKE**

DATE [Suggest a better date](#)

2017

LOCATION [Suggest a better location](#)



Washington, D.C.

COMMENTS & STORIES

<COMMENTER'S NAME> <DATE>

This is a great comment about a great piece of content!

LEAVE A COMMENT

Share your thoughts. Feel free to include links to videos, sounds, or webpages; or share a video

Upload a Video Comment

Submit

TAGS

Add a tag...

Submit

posters

movements

street

history

word

posters

INCLUDED IN



COUNTRY

United Kingdom



CITY

London



DISTRICT

Islington



SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

PIN

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

39202

5



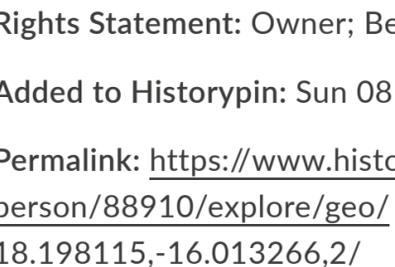
SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

TOUR

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39202

5



SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

COLLECTION

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

39202

SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

PROJECT

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

2365

123

43

METADATA

Licence: None

Attribution: Bernard Hodson, Martyn Bundy

Rights Statement: Owner; Bernard Hodson

Added to Historypin: Sun 08 Apr 2018

Permalink: <https://www.historypin.org/en/person/88910/explore/geo/18.198115,-16.013266,2/bounds/-87.619395,-99.732015,88.752343,67.705483/paging/1/pin/1105290>

Copy Link

Share Link

Libraries, Archives, Museums, Community Groups: find out how to use Historypin to connect with your community.

PROFILE VIEW



User Name

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/>

EDIT YOUR PROFILE

Pins	0
Collections	0
Tours	0
Profile Views	1

ABOUT

The Library of Congress Prints and Photographs have 14 million images. These include photographs, fine and popular prints and drawings, posters, and architectural and engineering drawings.

* This account is maintained by the Historypin Team, who have uploaded a selection of images from their collections which have no known copyright restrictions.

PROFILE ACTIVITY

JOINED 08 MARCH 2010



Add a Banner Image

Optimal size 3200x410px



Get Started

Share resources on HistoryPin.

Pin a piece of local history to a map

Use pins to create a

Collection or a Tour

Start a heritage project

PROFILE CHECKLIST

- Add profile photo >
- Add profile photo >
- Add a pin >
- Add a collection >
- Add a tour >

HIDE THIS



User Name

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/>

EDIT YOUR PROFILE

Pins	1000
Collections	9
Tours	0
Profile Views	55,964

ABOUT

The Library of Congress Prints and Photographs have 14 million images. These include photographs, fine and popular prints and drawings, posters, and architectural and engineering drawings.

* This account is maintained by the Historypin Team, who have uploaded a selection of images from their collections which have no known copyright restrictions.

PROFILE ACTIVITY

JOINED 08 MARCH 2010



FILTERS

Type: Tours & Collections

Dates: 1000–Present

Dates: 1000–Present



<project manager>



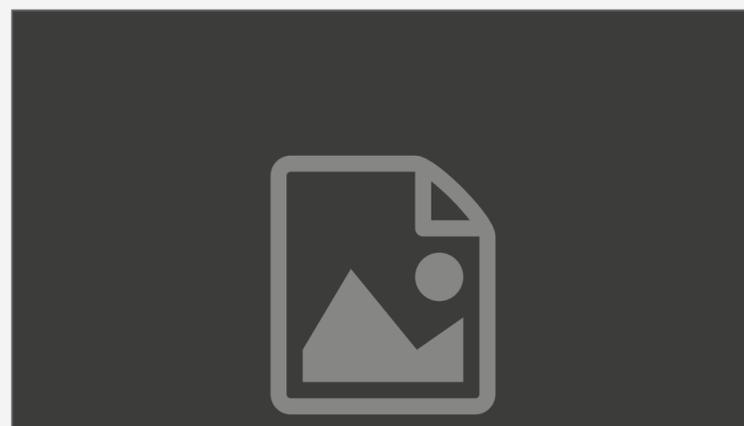
PROJECT

Mapping Magic

2365

123

43



SFMTA Photo Archive Collection



COLLECTION

SFMTA Photo Archive Collection

39202



CONTENT CREATION

CANCEL

PREVIEW

SAVE DRAFT

CONTINUE

Title required 50/50

Short Description 150/150

Add a short summary of your collection. This will appear alongside your collection title so people know what it's about.

BASIC DETAILS

CANCEL

PREVIEW

SAVE DRAFT

CONTINUE

Basic Details

Collection Settings

Landing Screen Image

Long Description

Contact Information

Collection Location

Keyword Tags

RSS Blog Feed

Most recent blog post will appear as a "card" in your collection.

PRO Custom Map overlay

Add a historical map on your collection map.

Collection Assets

Arcu dui Vivamus Arcu Felis Bibendum ut Tristique et Egestas

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BASIC DETAILS

EDIT

Collection Settings ^ HIDE

Gallery Default View

Map Only

Map & Gallery

Gallery Only

Most Popular First ∨

Public Contribution

ON Allowing other users to contribute to this collection.

Email Notifications

ON Email when pins or comments are added.

email@example.com

[Advanced Notification Settings](#)

Collection Assets

CHOOSE PINS >

CANCEL

PREVIEW

SAVE DRAFT

CONTINUE

Basic Details

Collection Settings

Landing Screen Image

Long Description

Contact Information

Collection Location

Keyword Tags

RSS Blog Feed

Most recent blog post will appear as a "card" in your collection.

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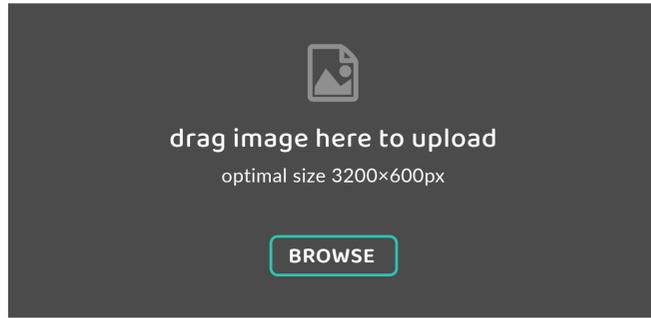
Collection Assets

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Collection Settings

SHOW



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Get in Touch

John Johnson: jjohnson@loremipsum.com

Location



Keyword Tags

Add a tag...

Submit

movements ×

posters ×

history ×

circus ×

word ×

street ×

ON Include an RSS Blog Feed in the collection

Collection Assets

CHOOSE PINS >

BASIC DETAILS

EDIT

LANDING SCREEN IMAGE

EDIT

LONG DESCRIPTION

EDIT

CONTACT INFORMATION

EDIT

COLLECTION LOCATION

EDIT

RSS BLOG FEED

SAVE CHANGES

CANCEL

PREVIEW

SAVE DRAFT

CONTINUE

Basic Details

Collection Settings

Landing Screen Image

Long Description

Contact Information

Collection Location

Keyword Tags

RSS Blog Feed

Most recent blog post will appear as a "card" in your collection.

PRO Custom Map overlay

Add a historical map on your collection map.

Collection Assets

Arcu dui Vivamus Arcu Felis Bibendum ut Tristique et Egestas

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Collection Settings SHOW

HIDE PREVIEW



BASIC DETAILS

EDIT

LANDING SCREEN IMAGE

EDIT

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LONG DESCRIPTION

EDIT

Get in Touch

John Johnson: jjohnson@loremipsum.com

CONTACT INFORMATION

EDIT

Location



San Francisco, CA

COLLECTION LOCATION

EDIT

Keyword Tags

Add a tag...

- movements x
- posters x
- history x
- circus x
- word x
- street x

RSS BLOG FEED

ON Include an RSS Blog Feed in the collection

SAVE CHANGES

Collection Assets CHOOSE PINS



 Search

Search

What would you like to pin?

Photo



Video or Sound



Text



NEXT >



Q Search

Search

Photo



CAMERA



WWW





Search

Photo



Describe your pin...

Title

required

Add a title...

50/50

Short Description

Add a short summary of your collection.
This will appear alongside your collection

Add a short description...

150/150

NEXT >

Appendix C. Abstract for Level III Proposal: Historypin for Collaborative Public Humanities Programs

Shift Design, Inc requests a 24-month Level 3 Digital Humanities Advancement grant to create new features for Historypin.org designed to support collaborative geospatial research for a broad diversity of humanities researchers and scholars. This builds on a successful Level 1 Digital Humanities Advancement grant that carried out user studies, conducted a code audit and analysis of existing technical infrastructure, and created new designs specifically for better tools for shared analysis and discovery of geospatial history through collaborative means.

Historypin.org is a popular free, user-friendly platform for crowdsourcing history developed in 2009. It is open to scholars, community groups, digital humanities classrooms, and the general public. Our platform is widely used in the work of digital humanities scholarly research, as well as by small cultural heritage organizations with little technical resources. To date, there are over 4,000 cultural heritage organizations registered on the platform, from tiny [libraries in the Colombian rainforests](#), to the US National Archives. Some example uses of the platform include Dr. Richard Chabran's [Latino Food Establishments](#) project at Arizona State University, Archivist Brandon Lundsford's [Charlotte's Historic West End](#) map at Johnson C. Smith University, and a class project at the University of Alaska Southeast about the [Trans-Atlantic Pipeline](#).

This Level 3 grant seeks to provide upgrades to the Historypin user interface that enable better group collaboration in geographic history and support three specific research areas, including: **Preservation, Place and Narrative; Collaboration in University Digital Humanities;** and **Collaborative Public History Programs**. The grant will support nine projects total in these three research areas that will help shape and refine the new tools and designs and also create showcase sites to demonstrate the possibilities of the new tools. Each of these projects will explore humanities questions critical to their work.

Humanities Questions

- How has our understanding of time and place shaped how we live today?
- What are the past and current narratives of people in different places and how does that help us understand who we are as a nation?
- What do we learn about places when different historical narratives intersect? How is that intersectional discovery enabled by a widely shared geographical history platform?
- How can curatorial tools lead to the discovery and amplification of historical narratives from traditionally under-represented voices?

Objectives

- Upgrade the Historypin codebase and publish as open source, making future additions and revisions open to digital humanists and other professionals and enthusiasts
- Continue to work with an advisory panel representing a diverse array of humanities scholars and cultural organizations to finalize new tools and designs for the site, with special attention to mobile-first development

- Create a geographic visualization of thousands of distributed cultural memory organizations and showcase their unique collections, measurably increasing visibility and engagement
- Create a collaborative geographical workspace that is suited for teaching use, as well as for groups of volunteers coordinating historical reporting and documentation
- Expand the opportunities for connectivity and interoperability with other archival content management systems
- Upgrade curatorial and discovery elements on the site and increase accessibility
- Create tiered accounts appropriate for a number of different users, from the casual history student to the archive uploading hundreds of photos in bulk
- Support and develop 9 showcase projects on the revised Historypin platform that leverage the new features for collaborative projects, exhibits, mobile tours, and online classes

Featured partners and projects would be supported through this grant to showcase their historical geography projects especially planned for this platform. Partners include:

I. Preservation, Place and Narrative

Many cultural heritage organizations, planning projects, or historical societies look at the importance of place and either the physical or cultural preservation of sites. This has been a common theme of some of the most prominent Historypin projects, and we seek here to demonstrate how communities can put their own history on the map, increasing interest in preservation.

- **East at Main Street**, Dr. Michelle Magalong: APIA Mapping Project gathers photographs, videos, memories, and other material related to places that are important to Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) communities. Few sites associated with APIA history and cultures have been recognized as landmarks. Raising awareness of these places will assist their preservation for the future and help create a more complete picture of United States history. This program would focus on Chinese Americans in Baltimore and Washington DC, and Korean Americans in Washington DC.
- **Mapping Indigenous Stories in Bulbancha and Louisiana at Large**: based on a monograph about Indigenous cultures in Louisiana, this project will explore particular places important to indigenous history in Southwest Louisiana, the homelands of the Atakapa-Ishak Nation of Indians. The mapping and exploration of place through geospatial discovery will form the basis of community discussion about our shared and conflicting historical narratives.

II. Collaboration in University Digital Humanities

While other geospatial history projects exist to support classroom use, we are particularly interested in exploring the use of Historypin to help reach beyond the classroom and into communities. These projects are designed to work with students to collaborate with people and projects beyond the university, making use of the new site designs and user flow.

- **Latino Food Establishments**, Dr. Richard Chabran. Latino food establishments are a growing sector of the U.S food market, which accounts for over 59 billion dollars in revenue. They are also a vibrant part of local economies, especially in Southwestern states. This collection documents Latino food establishments that are not part of a national chain. It demonstrates

the diversity and trends of Latino food establishments. The majority of these establishments presently in the collection are located in Arizona. For this particular effort we will be focusing on the Bay Area in California. The goals of this project are to provide students an opportunity to get out of the classroom and into the community where they can establish a conversation with a business establishment and contribute community-based assets to Historypin. The items in this collection are part of a broader Storytelling Sabor Initiative. Students have noted how this project was a learning experience for them about the importance of cultural competence and how web-based applications like Historypin can be deployed in local communities. This project is in partnership with the Ethnic Studies Library at UC Berkeley.

- **Mapping Global Cruise Ship Cities**, Dr. Richard Simpson. This project will design an international collaboration among universities, institutions, and communities that are impacted by the recent surge of the global cruise ship tourism industry. Building upon a current Historypin project entitled "Globalizing Southeast Alaska," we will develop a model to broaden the public outreach of the platform by identifying and linking cruise ship cities around the world. The development of an inter-urban globalized Historypin research project will advance public engagement and educational resources on how the cruise ship industry impacts the environment, economy, and culture of contemporary society. It will establish an international student and community exchange to collectively map how the global cruise ship industry constitutes human experience, urban development, and ecological transformations around the world. Finally it will provide a necessary comparative approach allowing cruise ships cities to be understood through the lens of a shared global production process.
- **New Orleans, Women & Pan-Africanism: Teaching Diasporic Activism Through Historypin**, Dr. Elizabeth Manley. In this semester-long course project to be undertaken at Xavier University of Louisiana, students will be led through a collaborative research project on women in the pan-Africanist movement in New Orleans across the first half of the twentieth century. In addition to conducting traditional historical / archival research to uncover the role of women in the city's (predominantly silenced) narratives of pan-Africanism, students will collectively identify the physical sites and locations of historic places and events of that movement, particularly as they involved women participants across the city's landscape. Through Historypin they will connect archival documents and oral histories with geographic markers in order to construct a spatial and temporal narrative of pan-Africanism that includes women. The learning objectives of the project include 1) enabling students as knowledge producers of their own histories; 2) making public a number of the neglected elements of New Orleans' history (including Afro-diasporic women activists, pan-Africanism) and their physical geography across the city; 3) uncovering the intersectional nature of marginalization in the production of history; 4) imparting the skills required to navigate a foreign digital platform and the possibilities inherent in public history.

III. Public History Programs

A third use case theme identified by our target audiences is collaborative public history programs that can involve both in-person and digital engagement with community partners. Our target audience in this theme can be both community memory organizations and universities, but the primary

motivation is to actively engage the wider community in the participation in and preservation of their own historical narrative.

- **The Manitos Community Memory Project** will engage 6-10 rural library, archive and museum community-based partners from the Indo-Hispano villages of northern New Mexico in a project to create interoperability between the Manitos Cultural Heritage Digital Archive and Historypin and that takes advantage of new Historypin functionality that can address the needs of rural communities that have not been mapped by Google. Content will be a combination of existing and newly-generated material under the direction of community partners with the support of the Manitos Community Memory leadership team. In partnership with New Mexico Highlands University, led by Shane Flores, Research Assistant.
- **The Green Book Travelers** project is a partnership with the Oklahoma All-Black Towns Foundation designed to connect community members across generations by telling family stories about travels. A digital map of the Green Book travel guide serves as a story starter for African Americans who traveled during segregation. Their stories, when told, lead to a personal understanding of how segregation shaped the lives of everyday people. Storytelling brings the generalized concept of segregation down to a specific human level. Hearing stories in the context of the places where it was made makes history more real to today's community and recording them preserves the everyday person's ongoing struggle against racism. The [site](#) has pins for over 1900 Green Book locations throughout the country. Led by Mike McUsic.