



NEWS RELEASE

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REAL PEOPLE. REAL STORIES.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AWARD A STEP TOWARD KANSAS NEWSPAPER COLLECTION ACCESSIBILITY

Kansas Historical Society selected to receive funding to digitize newspaper collection

TOPEKA, KS—The Kansas Historical Society announced that Kansas has been awarded funding by the National Endowment for the Humanities to participate in the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP). The Historical Society will receive \$259,354 to digitize 100,000 pages of Kansas newspapers, dating from 1860 to 1922. Kansas is one of seven new states being brought into the program in 2009, bringing the total number of participating states to 22.

Launched in 2005, NDNP is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress to provide enhanced access to U.S. newspapers. In 2007 the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress unveiled the program's Web resource, *Chronicling America* (chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/), is a searchable online database that currently contains more than one million pages published between 1880 and 1922 from 11 states and the District of Columbia and represents the news from more than 75 different cities and towns across the nation.

The Kansas Historical Society was established by the state's newspaper editors in 1875. A virtually complete collection of all Kansas newspapers published from 1875 to the present is available on microfilm or in original form. Historical Society Digital Initiatives Coordinator Michael A. Church said the NDNP funding paves the way to providing greater access to the agency's newspaper collection. "While the 100,000 pages supported by this project is a tiny fraction of the more than 13,000,000 newspaper pages in our collection published between 1860-1922," Church said, "this grant represents a giant step toward our long-term efforts to create a sustainable digital collection of historic Kansas newspapers available online."

Digitization will ensure that the state's newspapers will be available for future generations of researchers. Historian Virgil Dean is editor of the Historical Society's publication, *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* and said that the Kansas newspapers collection is critical to future research. "Perhaps no other single source is as important to the study of state and local history as the daily and weekly newspaper, yet they are often the most neglected," Dean said.

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“They are usually openly partisan and unabashed boosters of their respective community, but newspapers are often the only source we have for local opinion, as well as for vital social and economic information. The digitization of a part of the Historical Society’s rich collection of newspapers only can be a boon to researchers in this age when the World Wide Web is the starting point for most kinds of historical inquiry.”

Although the Historical Society is new to the NDNP, it already has a portion of its collections online at kansasmemory.org. *Kansas Memory* is the largest online collection of photographs and documents from Kansas history.

The Kansas Historical Society is a state agency that operates the Kansas Museum of History, State Archives & Library, Kansas Capitol Tour Center, and 16 state historic sites. For more information visit kshs.org.

The Kansas Historical Society does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs. The Historical Society requests prior notification to accommodate individuals with special needs or disabilities.