

A Collaborative Academic and Hospital Library Preservation and Digitization Initiative

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Abstract: Despite being only 35 years old, the Seven Oaks General Hospital in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada has experienced large scale changes in its role, six major additions and gone from being a stand-alone organization to being part of a regional health care system. In 2013 the University of Manitoba Medical Archivist partnered with the Hospital Librarian and Communications Director to preserve, digitize, and provide access to documents demonstrating the Hospital's history of growth, decline, change, and institutional decision-making from preconception in 1980 to 2006. Funding was received from the Manitoba Heritage Grants program and the Winnipeg Foundation Grants program in order to hire a student to describe and process 3.8 metres of photographs, textual materials and multimedia records. The digitized collection was made accessible via the University's online Digital Assets Management System. This project demonstrates that collaboration can foster new ideas and promote the success of projects that benefit archives, libraries, parent organizations and the community at large. A review of the literature reveals the rarity of hospital archival projects and thus this project also illustrates the emerging role that archivists can play in a hospital or other similar health care settings.

About the author:

Kerry Macdonald graduated in 2005 with an MLIS from the University of Western Ontario. Kerry has worked for the University of Manitoba as a health librarian at various academic hospital libraries throughout Winnipeg. In her current role at the Carolyn Sifton – Helene Fuld Library, St. Boniface Hospital, she provides information services and programs to support hospital staff, patients, families, and staff and students of the University.