Yellowstone's Archives Blitz

Anne L. Foster, Principal Investigator
Francis Shawn Bawden, Project Archivist

Project: Using a Team Approach to Expose Yellowstone's Hidden Collections
Yellowstone National Park, 2014-2015

Modeled on the NPS's BioBlitz program, a "processing blitz" deploys a small group to arrange and describe collections in a very short time period. This project addresses the challenges of processing collections efficiently and cost-effectively at a small and/or rural repository without ready access to professionals or even students. For such repositories, the processing blitz offers a way to make the most of Elderhostel groups, alternative spring break student programs, and professional "angel" projects.

Processing is generally an individual task. The Yellowstone project instead uses a team approach for all facets of arrangement and description. Instead of one processor working on one collection, a whole team of processors will arrange and catalog one collection, simultaneously. The project will also test the blitz concept with groups of varying experience and skills. One of the main outcomes of the grant—in addition to reducing our backlog—is the creation of some tools and tips for replicating the blitz at other institutions.

Follow us: #ArchivesBlitz
www.nps.gov/yell/blogs/museumblog.htm

Factors for Success:
- Large 20th century records—MPLP applies
- Institutional records—record types/some series known, even if giant mess
- Portions inventoried—record types/some series known, even if giant mess
- CMS can import from Excel for container lists
- Allowing teams to make decisions
- Comfort with chaos!

To date:
- 5 teams of 5 (1 week ea.)
- Grad students, allied professionals, volunteers
- 704 LF Processed
- 399 LF Described