

Bringing Digital Papers into the Traditional Museum: Examining the Territorial Governors through the Arizona Digital Newspaper Program

By Eden Robins and Christopher Sloan

HISTORY

As project manager of Arizona's Digital Newspaper Program, I began work on the idea of creating an interactive digital museum exhibit back in January of 2013. I was very well aware that this was Arizona's third and final eligible cycle in the LC/NEH National Digital Newspaper Program Grant. We had captured much history and stories from around the state, but I knew many, many more needed to be told. My hope is to prolong the digitization of Arizona newspapers beyond the NDNP grant, but just in case that isn't possible, I decided that it would be helpful to create some sort of legacy for this project.

I came to the conclusion that one way to create interest in and possibly perpetuate this project would be by raising public awareness. I was aware that our Capitol museum had a constant stream of visitors and they were working hard to bring in even more visitors. Luckily, the timing of my thoughts synced well with the goals of those in charge of our Capitol museum. The assistant director, Luke Bate and I met to discuss an interactive display for the museum. His goal was to update the museum experience in general as a draw for more people, exposure and awareness. While some passive exhibits would remain, his goal was to incorporate more interactive experience displays for visitors. Luke pointed out that he had space in their Territorial Governor's room for an exhibit and it was along the main visitor tour path. He went on to request that we incorporate the exhibit's theme with the room's theme: A history of the territorial governors of Arizona.

WHY THE CAPITOL MUSEUM AND TERRITORIAL GOVERNORS?

This seemed like a perfect partnership to me; learning about Arizona's territorial governors and utilizing the state's digital newspaper program to research that history. But how could I tie the two together in a way that would show how history was accessible and right at people's fingertips through digitized newspapers? How could I show the end user, researcher, student or teacher that learning about Arizona's territorial governors lives and accomplishments was now much easier through using the historic newspapers on the Arizona Digital Newspaper Program site? And beyond that, how could I promote how accessible and easy-to-navigate the ADNP site was?

About that same time, Chris Sloan joined our project team and from that point forward, he and I began trying to find answers to my questions. We started discussing and working on various ideas and approaches to an interactive exhibit. We attended outreach events and gleaned what we could from those gatherings. We also studied our own website to get a true grasp on how the end user could best utilize the information on it. We visited the capitol museum and took notes on the territorial governor's room and what it encompassed.

We learned a few things from this process. Our scope for this interactive display revolved around the territorial governors of Arizona and the Arizona Digital Newspaper Program. Our goal was to get the museum visitor engaged and interested in our exhibit. We wanted people to understand, in a fun, hands on and relevant way, how they can utilize our website to garner information for their research. So, fun, engagement, relevancy and interaction were our goals.

Chris and I tossed around different ideas until we finally settled on one. Well, actually three. We wanted the ADNP exhibit to contain three components for user interaction. Later, we had to disregard one of these components, but initially this is how the exhibit was formulated:

1. **Live site interaction:** This part of the display would allow visitors to access the ADNP site live at a workstation positioned within the museum exhibit and search for their topic of interest.
2. **Site simulation video:** This video would simulate using the actual site. It would run through the “how to” of navigating the ADNP site, covering the multifaceted Search, Browse, Newspaper Directory and “Where in Arizona?” search options. It will also include a virtual “tour guide” to walk the user through the site. The guide will be Governor Hunt, or at least an actor playing governor hunt.
3. **An interactive trivia game:** This component of the display will allow visitors to actively participate in a question and answer session revolving around Arizona’s territorial governors. Visitors will be able to pick the governor they’d like to learn about, and then choose one of three multiple choice answers to a question about that governor. If they choose correctly, they will be taken to the newspaper page on the ADNP site where the information about that governor was derived.

WHY THESE GOVERNORS?

Eden and I knew that the future Territorial Governor’s room would include a new section dedicated to the Rough Riders, so we wanted to keep that in mind as we chose the content for the exhibit. One of the Governors we chose to feature in the exhibit, Myron McCord, was selected because he was responsible for mustering the first volunteer cavalry regiment in Arizona, which became part of the Rough Riders.

Aside from the considerations of placement on content there were a few other major guidelines we looked at when selecting content. We knew that including all of the Territorial Governors would not be possible right out of the gate, so we would have to narrow the field to a sampling of them. We wanted governors whose impact on Arizona’s history had been the greatest, and yet also provided a representative picture of what governing Arizona Territory entailed. We also wanted to governor’s who had a great deal of press or who were involved in the press itself. There were 16 different Territorial Governors (Nathan Oakes Murphy being appointed twice) and we thought that if we chose about a third

of them to be included in the exhibit, it would be sufficient. We thought that five or six governors would allow us, given our time and resources, to focus and develop quality content. Given the parameters we placed on ourselves, we chose John Noble Goodwin, Lewis Wolfley, Nathan Oakes Murphy, Louis Cameron Hughes, Myron Hawley McCord, and Richard Elihu Sloan. Goodwin and Sloan were the first and last Territorial Governors, respectively. Wolfley and Hughes were both extremely prominent and extremely partisan newspapermen, who were often enemies. Finally, as stated previously, Murphy was elected twice and McCord mustered the volunteers who were absorbed into the Rough Riders.

Of the six, only Hughes was a Democrat, but out of all of the sixteen Territorial Governors, only three were Democrats. Many prominent politicians were involved in the newspaper business, especially prior to 1900. We selected Wolfley and Hughes because their battles in the pages of their papers (Wolfley founded the *Arizona Republican* in 1890. In 1930, the *Republican* would become the *Arizona Republic*. Hughes ran the *Arizona Star* in Tucson until he left in 1907) were representative of the partisanship of the newspaper business in Territorial Arizona, but also because they were the most extreme examples of this trend. McCord was selected, not because of any particular accomplishments as governor, but because of his contributions to the Spanish-American War.

In a sense, this is in line with the accomplishments of many of the Territorial Governors. Most left important legacies outside of office, but were ineffectual as governors. Murphy, though elected twice had little impact other than to petition for Arizona's statehood (he was not the first to do this) and as a booster and promoter for the state's businesses. He was removed from office by Grover Cleveland to make way for a Democratic governor at the end of his first term and stepped down so his friend Alexander O. Brodie could take office after his second term. As a matter of fact, Wolfley, Murphy and Hughes were all removed from office for their refusals to back the policy or legislation of their parties, McCord resigned to lead his volunteer cavalry, and Sloan had to step down when Arizona became a state (replaced by the oft-elected Democrat George W.P. Hunt). Only Goodwin left to pursue a greater political calling, to serve as the Territory's delegate to the 39th U.S. Congress.

After and during this phase of our content development, Eden and I had to consider the level of engagement the public would be able to have with these individuals. We had to find the "juiciest" tidbits on our Governors in order to grab the visitor's attention. We scoured papers for stories that would draw people in, that were exceptional or important in some way and that people could connect with. The founding of Arizona Territory and the territory's passage into statehood were important historical milestones for the state, though I thought the trivia game would be a good place to highlight some of their lesser-known gubernatorial accomplishments, and a connection to the Rough Riders, something that the visitors were already experiencing in proximity to the ADNP exhibit, would provide a contextual thread that could be followed. Murphy's twice-appointment to the position of territorial governor was certainly exceptional, but not particularly newsworthy according to Territorial papers. However, a bid for statehood was always big news and Murphy certainly had that under his belt. Last but not least, the invective-ridden battles between political rivals would certainly appeal to the same salacious desires that draw people to tabloids and gossip websites, but could be tempered by the progressive strides towards modern journalism that these two gentlemen made. This is what we finally came up with, though even this is still subject to revision before the exhibit goes live:

Governor's Trivia

1. John N. Goodwin – December 29th 1863 to March 4th, 1865

John Noble Goodwin served as the first Territorial Governor of Arizona, but whom did President Lincoln actually nominate for the position?

- a) Richard A. McCormick
- b) John A. Gurley**
- c) Anson P.K. Safford

Correct! John A. Gurley was nominated by President Lincoln to be the first Territorial Governor of Arizona, but died suddenly of appendicitis in Ohio before he was able to take office. [Screen will then show the newspaper page that provides this information]

<http://adnp.azlibrary.gov/cdm/compoundobject/collection/sn82016242/id/4/rec/21>

2. Lewis Wolfley – April 8th, 1889 to August 20th 1890

Lewis Wolfley founded what major Phoenix newspaper as a political platform for his vision of the Republican Party in Arizona, May 19th, 1890?

- a) The Arizona Star
- b) The Phoenix Herald
- c) The Arizona Republican**

Correct! Wolfley founded the Arizona Republican with a number of his territorial appointees. While the paper was attacked by both Democrats and Republicans (who expected government printing contracts and felt slighted when Wolfley decided to circumvent them and start his own paper) as a political “organ”, it eventually helped pave the way for nonpartisan, professional journalism in the territory. [Screen will then show the newspaper page that provides this information]

<http://adnp.azlibrary.gov/cdm/compoundobject/collection/sn84020558/id/4/rec/1>

3. Nathan O. Murphy – May 11th, 1892 to April 5th, 1893 & August 1st 1898 to June 30th 1902

Nathan O. Murphy was the first Territorial Governor to recommend that Congress pass a statehood enabling act, but Arizona was rejected for what reason?

- a) Too poor and too deeply in debt**
- b) Too small in terms of population

- c) Too recently settled

Correct! The Arizona Republican reports that in Washington it was believed that the territory was “in heavy debt and great poverty” and that “the damaging stain of poverty and bankruptcy” had been “fixed... upon Arizona”. [Screen will then show the newspaper page that provides this information]

<http://adnp.azlibrary.gov/cdm/compoundobject/collection/sn84020558/id/4885/rec/2>

4. Louis C. Hughes – April 12th, 1893 to April 1st, 1896

Louis C. Hughes was a controversial governor in his day, deeply involved in newspaper and political rivalries. Despite these bitter divisions, Hughes managed to organize an important group made up of people from a variety of political backgrounds. What group was this?

- a) The Arizona Cattlemen’s Organization
b) **The Arizona Press Association**
c) The Arizona Rodeo Clown Convention

Correct! Louis Hughes was responsible for organizing the Arizona Press Association, which was made up of powerful newspaper editors and owners from across the territory, including his enemy Lewis Wolfley. [Screen will then show the newspaper page that provides this information]

<http://adnp.azlibrary.gov/cdm/compoundobject/collection/sn84020558/id/1316/rec/1>

5. Myron H. McCord – July 29th, 1897 to August 1st 1898

Myron McCord, in his speech at the dedication of Old Main at Tempe Normal School (now Arizona State University), said that which of these things is “the foundation of national greatness”?

- a) **“Intellectual improvement”**
b) “Informed Patriotism”
c) “A well-prepared teacher”

Correct! Known as an excellent soldier, Myron McCord is best known for organizing the First Territorial Regiment of Volunteers to fight in the Spanish-American War and resigning the governorship to fight in that War. He was also an incredibly gifted speaker. [Screen will then show the newspaper page that provides this information]

<http://adnp.azlibrary.gov/cdm/compoundobject/collection/sn85032938/id/3143/rec/10>

6. Richard E. Sloan – May 1st 1909 to February 14th, 1912

Richard E. Sloan was the last territorial governor of Arizona, leaving office on the day Arizona became a state. Sloan was an amateur historian and in an effort to preserve the territory's history, removed Mulford Windsor and appointed a new Territorial Historian. Who received this honor?

- a) George P. Hunt
- b) James McClintock
- c) **Sharlot Hall**

Correct! Sharlot Hall was named Territorial Historian in 1909 by Governor Sloan, making her the first woman to hold any territorial office. Sloan's decision was somewhat controversial, as can be seen in this article from the *Tombstone Epitaph*. [Screen will then show the newspaper page that provides this information]

<http://adnp.azlibrary.gov/cdm/compoundobject/collection/sn95060905/id/4439/rec/>

WHY THIS TYPE OF EXHIBIT?

In addition to exposing more people to the ADNP website, Eden and I thought that the opportunity to bring the virtual into the realm of the physical, to connect a traditional museum exhibit to our digital collections in a fun and engaging way, was an opportunity that was too good to pass up. It would be a win-win: the Capitol museum would be able to blend its traditional Territorial Governors exhibit with some of the digital content available through the Library and Archives.

This would not be the first connection that the Capitol Museum made with the digital collections; they had already invited the Arizona Memory Project (AMP) to create a display that would allow visitors to access their web content. The Arizona Memory Project "provides access to the wealth of primary sources in Arizona libraries, archives, museums and other cultural institutions" such as "government documents, photographs, maps, and objects that chronicle Arizona's past and present" (from AMP's mission, found at <http://azmemory.azlibrary.gov/cdm/about/>). AMP already has an interactive display with their website in the Capitol Museum, and they are currently working on an interactive exhibit. ADNP decided to take the opposite tack and make the centerpiece of our exhibit an interactive trivia game that will draw visitors in, make them familiar with the content available on the ADNP website, show them how easy it is to use the website and access its content, *but* allow them to either access the website on their mobile devices *or* take information about the ADNP home with them so they can do their own searches outside of the museum. Partly this decision was made as a result of being faced with the choice of having the exhibit be a demonstration of the live website or the trivia game and how-to simulation, but not both.

There were some concerns from IT that if we ran the live website in conjunction with the trivia game (which would essentially be hosted as "dark pages" from the website), visitors would just generally abuse the ability to access the internet and end up in all manner of potentially inappropriate

corners of the web because we would not be able to block access to the rest of the internet from the website while we were running the “dark” pages. Initially we thought that we could provide access to the website from a separate CPU, but acquiring another computer would have proved too costly and would compromise our original design for the exhibit too much. After discarding that idea it came down to a definite either-or scenario. We chose to go with the trivia game and sideline the live website because we thought it preserved the integrity of our original vision for the exhibit.

Eden and I chose to do the exhibit because we believe strongly in the mission and purpose of the ADNP. The exhibit we conceptualized would be a vehicle for reaching more people than tabling at expos and conferences generally does, people already interested enough in Arizona’s history that they were visiting the Capitol Museum. Because it is an exhibit, we know people are not going to be spending a great deal of time in front of the kiosk, nor do we want them to. The trivia game is constructed to allow patrons to spend a brief period in front of the kiosk, generate interest in the kiosk, causing more people to gravitate towards it, and come away understanding what the ADNP has to offer with the tools to access it on their own time. Were we to offer people the website to peruse as they saw fit, it might create another possibility for abuse: patrons using the kiosk to do research on the ADNP site for extended periods of time and preventing others from getting a chance to use it.

COLLABORATION

It’s important to note that this endeavor encompassed multiple branches in our division and would involve collaboration between these branches. Chris and I had to work with a team of people outside of our own to turn the dream for this exhibit into a reality.

We worked with the following branches and individuals:

IT Department: We had to purchase computer equipment needed for our presentation and had to go through this process aided by our IT department.

Museum: We needed approval from the museum’s assistant director on the content we wanted to incorporate into our exhibit and make sure it fit in with his overall ideas for the territorial governor’s room. As mentioned above, coordinating with the museum and its present goals provided an opportunity for us. There were, however, also challenges. We wanted to present a fun, playful and engaging learning experience for the museum visitor. Our playful approach was one that was carefully considered for its merit by the museum staff, but after discussion and further cooperation, Luke Bate gave us the go ahead on our content and presentation.

We also needed input and help from the museum’s virtual experience manager to develop the most effective and engaging way to present our content to a targeted museum visitor. Our IT department and the museum’s assistant director also had to work together.

Archives: In addition, we needed direction from the Archives director on presenting history in this way. Further, we enlisted the assistance of our special collections librarian in our Archives branch to establish and verify material about each governor as well as the photo archivist from that same branch to acquire

good quality digital photos for the exhibit and to help us with the specific animation needs to make this exhibit more engaging.

Volunteers: We recruited volunteers to help us with this project. The museum had a long time volunteer who provided information to museum visitors. In addition to this volunteer service, he had also worked for the entire division over the years as a character actor, playing the part of our state's first governor, Governor George W. P. Hunt at various outreach events. He was asked to help us with our site video, by playing the governor as a virtual "guide". A simulation video was created to help visitors learn how best to utilize the ADNP site.

In addition, we had to work with our division's funding development manager to find a graphic designer willing to volunteer their time to help us. They also had to be skilled enough to create both the hard copy exterior graphics we needed to transform our somewhat generic kiosk into an old fashioned newspaper stand and to help us with any digital graphic design needed for the exhibit presentation.

Other exhibits: In addition to working within the context of the Territorial Governor's exhibit we were placing our exhibit beside the soon to be unveiled Arizona Rough Rider's Flag display and had to work with that opening in relation to ours. This also proved to be great timing. This exhibit had acquired a new display case and an opening event was being planned to showcase this. Luke Bate agreed that unveiling both the Arizona Rough Rider flag display and our ADNP display would be a great joint effort. We liked the idea of this as well because we knew this would provide an even wider exposure base due to its dual purpose.

In the end, this exhibit became the child of a whole community. Various branches and individuals helped develop it. Ongoing input and advice helped shape it. And ultimately, visitors and their thoughts about the exhibit will determine its future.

Our hope is that this legacy will be long lasting in the minds and hearts of those who visit the museum and that they then go one to tell others about it. We hope those others will then visit and tell others. And they will tell still more, so that the history of Arizona can be taught again and again through our state's digital newspapers.

Historical information about the Territorial Governors comes from the links to the newspapers provided as well as the Arizona Memory's Project's collection of Territorial Governor Portraits by William Besser located at <http://azmemory.azlibrary.gov/cdm/landingpage/collection/acmter>

