



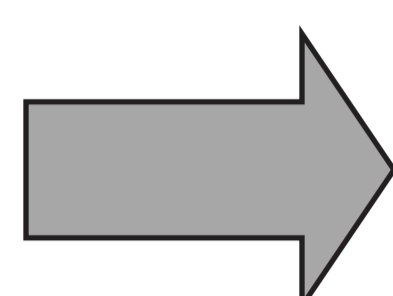
Canadore College and Nipissing University Archives and Special Collections—CA ON00408 C004-S03-0280-01

## Canadore College and Nipissing University Archives

**W**hat do you get when you mix a fledgling archive, travelling exhibitions and an academic library? A pilot project of course! Beginning in October 2016, Canadore College and Nipissing University Archives began experimenting with the use of Omeka.net to increase exposure and accessibility of archival content while also complementing planned travelling exhibitions. In preparation for larger, future library exhibitions, we identify pitfalls, opportunities and best practices as we pursue an accessible archival future.

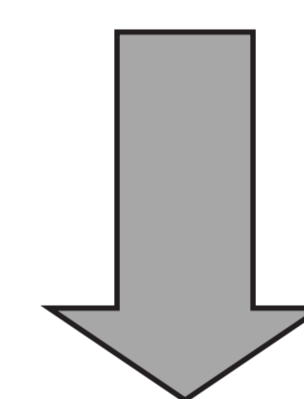
### Objectives:

- . Highlight selected archival content for students, faculty, staff, and the general public
- . Increase awareness of the Archives' existence
- . Help improve the accessibility of the Archives
- . Highlight some of our archival content for Library visitors



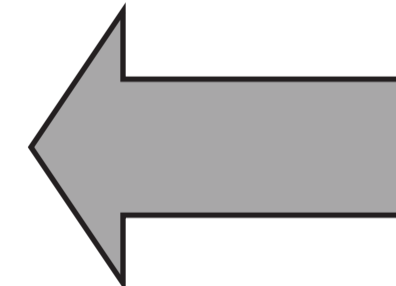
### Workflow/Method:

- . Plan objectives and how Omeka.net could enhance existing and upcoming initiatives (travelling exhibitions etc.)
- . Establish objectives for Omeka.net exhibition
- . Establish thematic outline for exhibition and identify potential archival resources to be used
- . Researched other sites, online information, experiences, tutorials, etc.
- . Create Omeka.net account, establish themes, install and configure plugins
- . Practice with small uploads of content to visualize results and understand the software prior to undertaking a large input of content
- . Edit the content of metadata elements as needed, establish mandatory fields for public view, and upload bulk data (CSV Import plugin)
- . Build and edit exhibit
- . Change items, collections (if used), and exhibit to public view to allow online access



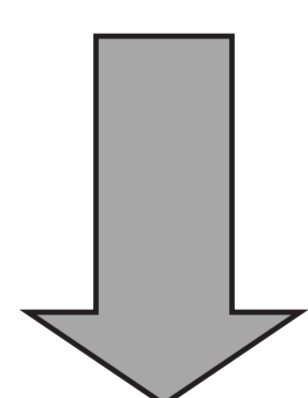
### Pitfalls:

- . Time - allow considerably more time than expected
- . Be prepared to redo portions several times in order to correct unexpected software behaviour/results
- . Learning curve can be steep but once skills are in place work can proceed quickly
- . Limited flexibility to edit/adjust metadata field titles in Omeka.net - additional content may end up in inappropriate fields
- . Because this was experimental, knowledge and collection gaps were encountered that were unexpected
- . Omeka.net Exhibit Builder plugin does not save automatically - the user is able to move easily to new areas without saving, resulting in lost work
- . Limited number of plugins



### Opportunities:

- . Make use of existing resources produced by others by linking to additional resources within your own institution or elsewhere
- . Omeka.net offers different levels of functionality depending on the subscription plan. As this was a pilot project we opted to use the free subscription which only provides 15 plugins and 4 themes. Paid subscriptions offer increased layout options, themes and plugins for customizing the final product. For full functionality, Omeka.org provides a highly flexible platform that can be customized to fit individual needs, but at the cost of requiring technical resources that were not available to us



### Best Practices:

- . Use the CSV Import plugin - it can be a huge timesaver
- . Use Hide Elements plugin - not necessary for all Dublin Core Fields to be visible
- . Multiple file uploads of the same item will upload multiple items. If deleting a file (e.g. full CSV spreadsheet), be sure collaborators are not using the item from that file in their exhibit - info/image will be lost
- . Save, save, save - more frequent saving will ensure you don't lose content
- . Select themes and plugins early (the key plugins we used were: CSV Import, Exhibit Builder, and Hide Elements)
- . Focus on content first, appearance second
- . Save "window dressing" (social media etc.) for the end
- . Establish your "must have" elements and be prepared to skip / save others for later enhancements
- . Ensure there is an understanding of each themes' functionality prior to selecting as subsequent theme changes may disable desired functionality
- . Write as much text off-line as possible to avoid timeout issues and lost data
- . Develop exhibit plan (text and images) in advance to expedite online implementation



<http://nucc.omeka.net/exhibits/show/tourism-in-the-north>