New and Improved: The Digital Library of Georgia

Toby Graham, Digital Library of Georgia

The Digital Library of Georgia (DLG) is your gateway to Georgia history and culture online. Now, through its newly redesigned web site, the DLG is more useful and more inclusive than ever before. It connects visitors to more than a half million images and pages of electronic text divided into nearly sixty distinct collections drawn from 120 institutions and agencies across Georgia and in other states.

The new site is available at http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu.

The redesigned Digital Library of Georgia provides a seamless virtual library bringing together digital resources from forty different libraries, archives, and museums, as well as eighty agencies of Georgia’s state government. The DLG offers visitors 18,000 historical photographs from the Georgia Archives, 22,000 Georgia government publications, original documents on the Native American experience in the Southeast, and historical materials on gold mining in North Georgia. It includes Civil War diaries, photographs on African American arts in Atlanta, acts of the state legislature dating back to the 18th century, historic books, and many other digitized collections. The DLG also connects users to online articles in the popular and eminently useful New Georgia Encyclopedia.

With the new web site, visitors can locate items from across these collections with a single search. In addition to a basic keyword search, the redesigned site provides advanced features for finding resources. These include the ability to limit by collection, institution, date, or type of material.

The new site also has extensive browsing features to help visitors easily make use of the many collections available.

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As public libraries enter their fourth year of major reductions in state funding, the role of GALILEO in public library service becomes increasingly apparent. At the Troup-Harris-Coweta-Regional Library, local library support has made the system 48th out of the 58 library systems. While this is not a record of which the library system is proud, it has made it necessary to stretch our materials dollars and to carefully select additions to the collection.

Our library in Newnan is reviewing its periodical subscriptions to ascertain which local subscriptions can be cancelled because the title is available on GALILEO. Besides the obvious reason, to save money, a less obvious reason is the need to save space. Back issues of periodicals take up precious room we do not have at any of our library locations.

A phenomenon we recognized when the Internet and GALILEO first became available remains true today: anything that can be printed from an online source is better than the same information from a print source. Students would rather search several GALILEO databases or cruise the Internet than walk to a shelf five feet away and pull a volume of an encyclopedia. With GALILEO, library staff know students are searching a reputable source.

February marks Black History Month, which illustrates one of the most valuable uses of GALILEO. Teachers regularly assign their classes the task of gathering information on African-American inventors, many of whom had little written about their lives. Using GALILEO, information can be located on John Stanard’s patent for the refrigerator; Sarah Boone’s invention of the ironing board; W. H. Richardson’s invention of the baby carriage; Jan Matzeliger’s invention of the shoe-making machine; and Garrett Morgan’s invention of the traffic signal. Only several of our print reference books have any citations referring to these people. GALILEO also reduces the “first student in gets the books” syndrome.

Collections of public libraries vary significantly from those of academic libraries, yet the line between the two is blurring. Although there is a college two blocks from the LaGrange Memorial Library, many of their students use the public library while many members of the public use the college library. This has changed our collection development strategy. Although we don’t have in-depth academic materials, we do purchase items appropriate for undergraduate use. We also find ourselves increasingly supporting distance education students and technical college students. GALILEO has given us the common denominator to do this.

Surprisingly, the database that staff use the most is WorldCat. While this database has become a backbone of ILL, it is a great tool for assisting in locating the correct title of a book or similar books on specialized subjects. Many times, the user will drive to the owning library, if it is a reasonable distance; in other instances, the user may decide to purchase the material once they have the correct bibliographic information and a firm price; or the user finds a similar title available locally that will serve as well.

In these difficult economic times, GALILEO has enabled the library to remain a viable resource for the provision of materials. The library can provide up-to-date periodicals and portals to support a number of different interests and age groups. Requests range from information about Usher and Green Day, to bike racing and skateboarding, to Georgia vital statistics. Through GALILEO, the library system can serve a wide variety of users without having to purchase a book that may have only limited interest in our communities.
GALILEO at the GPLS Children’s Services Annual Conference

GALILEO staff attended the Children’s Services Annual Conference sponsored by Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS) in Macon on February 11, 2005. The conference was attended by children’s and youth services’ librarians from public libraries and media specialists from the K-12 community. Karen Minton, GALILEO Support Services, gave a presentation on GALILEO resources, focusing particularly on the reading tools available in the database NoveList. NoveList, available to all Georgia citizens through their public libraries, offers tools for creating subject reading lists, read-alikes, lists of books in series, lists of award-winning titles, and help in assisting readers to find the books they want to read.
When legendary African-American Harlem Renaissance painter Romare Bearden and his wife, dancer and choreographer Nanette Bearden, visited Atlanta’s Neighborhood Arts Center in March 1978, Jim Alexander captured the event on film. Now, Internet users can view Alexander’s photography online through GALILEO’s Digital Library of Georgia in Community Art in Atlanta, 1977-1987: Jim Alexander’s Photographs of the Neighborhood Arts Center from the Auburn Avenue Research Library at http://www.galileo.usg.edu/express?link=anac. They can also conduct online searches of many other Auburn Avenue Research Library archives and manuscript collections through the new Auburn Avenue Research Library Finding Aids accessible at http://www.galileo.usg.edu/express?link=aafa. The Digital Library of Georgia and the Auburn Avenue Research Library, a branch of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System, worked together to make this collection and the finding aids accessible online. Georgia HomePLACE encouraged this collaborative digitization project, which is supported with Federal LSTA funds administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the Georgia Public Library Service, a unit of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

Community Art in Atlanta, 1977-1987: Jim Alexander’s Photographs of the Neighborhood Arts Center from the Auburn Avenue Research Library provides online access to fifty-five photographs depicting significant African American cultural and community events in and around the Atlanta-based organization, including visits by notable people, outreach projects, arts festivals, and social demonstrations during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The Neighborhood Arts Center, conceived by the late Atlanta mayor Maynard Jackson in 1974, and operating at several Atlanta locations from 1975 through 1989, enhanced appreciation of African-American visual and performing arts. To help visitors better understand the meaning and significance of the photographs, the web site also provides extensive contextual information including a Jim Alexander biography, a history and chronology of the Neighborhood Arts Center, suggested readings, and related links.

The Auburn Avenue Research Library Finding Aids online database provides descriptive information on the contents and historical context for the physical collections of archives and manuscripts housed at the Auburn Avenue Research Library in Atlanta. Internet users can search – by topic, title, or creator – more than eighty unique research collections, including personal papers, organization records, oral histories, photographs, and audio-visual resources. Electronic inventories of each collection listed in the database, derived from print finding aids created by the Archives Division of the Auburn Avenue Research Library, provide general information about the collection materials, historical and biographical sketches, administrative information, and container listings. These newly accessible online finding aids significantly enhance research capabilities at the Auburn Avenue Research Library.

Community Art in Atlanta, 1977-1987: Jim Alexander’s Photographs of the Neighborhood Arts Center from the Auburn Avenue Research Library and Auburn Avenue Research Library Finding Aids are part of the Digital Library of Georgia, a GALILEO initiative based at the University of Georgia Libraries. Visit the Digital Library of Georgia at http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu. Access is free to the public and no password is required.
Meet the Staff: Brad Baxter

The name Brad Baxter comes up often at GALILEO and Digital Library of Georgia meetings. Often it is included in a very common statement of, “I think we can do that, but I will need to ask Brad.” Brad Baxter is GALILEO’s Technical Coordinator. Working out of the sub basement at the University of Georgia Library, our lead programmer is the mastermind behind many of the functionalities and features of the GALILEO and Digital Library of Georgia projects.

Though programming is Brad’s favorite hobby, he is a fun-loving guy that enjoys almost anything. He especially enjoys spending time with his wife Elaine, dogs Avon and Sydney and cat Raz, traveling around the United States and the world—he is especially fond of Jamaica, and working on his house and garden.

When asked what is the best thing about working for GALILEO and the Digital Library of Georgia, Brad responded, “The best thing about working for GALILEO and the Digital Library of Georgia is knowing that I’m touching the lives of thousands of people. I’m not responsible for creating the data; and I’m only one of a number of good folks working hard on these projects, but nevertheless, having an avenue where I can use my small talents to make even a little difference is very satisfying.”

For Your Information

- To subscribe to the GALILEO listserv, go to http://www.usg.edu/galileo/listserv/.
- To subscribe to the GALILEO Planet, send your email address to galileo.planet@usg.edu.
- For a complete list of GALILEO Subcommittee, see http://www.usg.edu/galileo/comm/subcomm.phtml.
- To learn more about the GALILEO initiative, go to http://www.usg.edu/galileo/.
- For GALILEO questions and technical support, call 1-888-897-3697 or e-mail helpdesk@usg.edu.

Upcoming Training

Training for K-12 Media Specialists
Members of the K-12 community can contact their Educational Technology Training Center (ETTC) to register. The ETTC web site is at http://www.ga-edtech.org/Center.html.

- Albany State University, Albany April 11, 2005
- Albany State University, Albany April 12, 2005
- Valdosta State University, Valdosta April 13, 2005
- Macon State College, Macon April 26, 2005
- National Science Center/Fort Discovery, Augusta April 27, 2005

Britannica Training for All GALILEO Users
The trainer focuses on Britannica encyclopedias aimed at elementary, middle, and high school, as well as adult users. The Britannica online resources include great encyclopedias and a lot more!

- Dougherty County Library, Albany April 12, 2005, 2:00pm - 4:00pm
- Valdosta-Lowndes County Library April 13, 2005, 2:00pm - 4:00pm
Spring is time to jump-start those resolutions that have lapsed since the new year started, and GALILEO health databases can help. Explore the databases described below to find out about nutrition, sports, prescription drugs, nutritional supplements and herbal medicine, and other consumer health information. These databases are great sources for allied health and clinical health information, of course, as well as good sources for high school health topical papers. Note that the databases listed here are available to all GALILEO users; check at your institution or check the “Database listings by consortia” list at http://www.usg.edu/galileo/about/inst/dblists to see if you have access to more health-related resources.

**Alt HealthWatch**

This alternative health database provides full text for more than 140 publications in the collection, including many peer-reviewed journals, with articles covering complementary and alternative medicine dating back to 1990.

**Clinical Pharmacology**

This database provides access to up-to-date drug monographs for all U.S. prescription drugs, hard-to-find herbal and nutritional supplements, over-the-counter products, and new and investigational drugs. Note that the core GALILEO offering is geared to patients; some institutions offer “Clinical Pharmacology Complete,” which includes not only the patient-level, but also the clinical-level reference.

**Health Source Consumer Edition**

The consumer edition of Health Source provides information on many health topics including the medical sciences, food sciences and nutrition, childcare, sports medicine and general health. To retrieve useful patient reference sheets for a variety of illnesses and conditions, limit your search by typing “Clinical Reference Systems” in the journal field.

**Health Source Nursing/Academic Edition**

The nursing/academic edition provides more than 550 scholarly full-text journals focusing on many medical disciplines of interest to those in nursing and allied health.

**MEDLINE**

MEDLINE provides authoritative medical information on medicine, nursing, dentistry, veterinary medicine, the health care system, pre-clinical sciences, and much more. Created by the National Library of Medicine, MEDLINE allows users to search abstracts from over 4,800 current biomedical journals. By using the EBSCOhost version, you will have access to some linked full-text articles.
through the Digital Library of Georgia. By clicking on an online map, users can locate historical images, aerial photography, encyclopedia articles, and other resources on each of Georgia’s 159 counties. A clickable timeline allows browsing by historical periods. Visitors may select collections based on the types of materials they hold—such as letters or diaries—or users may view all of the collections from a particular institution. The Digital Library of Georgia site also categorizes its collections by topics, such as “The Arts,” “Government and Politics,” and “Peoples and Cultures.”

Many of the Digital Library of Georgia’s key stakeholders guided the site redesign. In April 2004, the DLG assembled a focus group of K-12 educators, public and academic librarians, archivists, information technology and digital library professionals, and scholarly publishers. The group created a shared vision for the redesign, through which the Digital Library of Georgia would re-conceive how it presents itself to the public, how it works, and how it promotes the digital library efforts of other institutions. The focus group included representatives from the Georgia Public Library Service, Georgia Department of Education, GALILEO, Coweta County Schools, Athens Regional Library System, University of Georgia Press/New Georgia Encyclopedia, University of Georgia Libraries, Georgia State University Library, and Georgia Tech Library.

After a 5-month process of design and development, the DLG took a beta version of the site back to the initial focus group and to many other stakeholders. The DLG used the input collected from the stakeholder review process to make additional refinements to the site. It also made revisions based on usability testing conducted by GALILEO Support Services.

The redesign of the Digital Library of Georgia makes the site more functional, and it advances the DLG’s collaborative mission. The redesign also provides an architecture upon which the Digital Library of Georgia can continue to build. The content available through the DLG represents only a small fraction of Georgia’s cultural treasures, and the Digital Library of Georgia will continue to add valuable and useful content through its partnerships with libraries, archives, museums, government agencies, and allied organizations across the state.

The Digital Library of Georgia is a GALILEO initiative based at the University of Georgia Libraries. For more information about the DLG, contact the director at tgraham@uga.edu.