

Guidelines for Collection Descriptions

rev03_2020-05

Short Descriptions

Construct short descriptions that intrigue the reader and clearly communicate the content of the collection.

- Limit to no more than 328 characters with spaces (about 55 words).
- Vary word order so that all the collections on the page don't sound the same.
- Focus on the theme of the **digital** collection.
- Use dates and numbers judiciously—they may require updating if the collection expands.
- Acknowledge grant funding where appropriate.
- If access to the collection is restricted, include an access disclaimer.
- Italicize publication titles in the short description text.
- Do not include hyperlinks.
- Do not introduce or discuss the partner(s) associated with the collection (exception – umbrella collections such as Rescuing Texas History).

Collection Icons

Select or create images that are visually interesting, represent the collection, are suitable for all audiences, and have a minimal file size.

- 200 x 200 pixels
- JPEG file 20KB or smaller

Long Descriptions

When information is available, construct long descriptions that provide additional details and context for the collection.

- Generally limit to 500 words.
- Employ headings and bullet points to define content. Use Markdown heading #3 (###).
- Focus on the **digital** collection.
- If needed for context, include information about history, issuing agencies, title changes, access, parent collection, project details, or acknowledgements.
- Italicize publication titles in the long description text.
- Limit use of hyperlinks. Embed any links in text rather than listing the URLs.
- Do not profile the associated partner(s) here unless needed to provide context for the collection.

Some Caveats

Write descriptions with an eye to longevity so we can avoid continual correction. Something you describe as “new” won't be in five years. Likewise, the number of items or dates covered may change over time as more items are added to the collection.

Be aware of information such as partners, dates, or geographic coverage that is automatically appended to the long description.

Partners sometimes have very specific ideas about their partner and collection descriptions. Negotiation and/or bending the rules may be required for good partner relations. Use good judgment.

NDNP-funded newspaper collections may have commissioned essays that exceed the 500-word limit for long descriptions.

Examples

When the short description is too long, condense by focusing on key facts about the collection.

Original:

Jefferson Jimplecute



The Jimplecute was one of Marion County's most influential publications, and survives today as Texas's fifth oldest newspaper. It was published by Taylor and Taylor as the Jimplecute from 1900 to 1907, then under the name of the Jefferson Jimplecute from 1907 to 1926. The weekly served primarily the town of Jefferson, but it also circulated throughout northeast Texas and occasionally addressed its contents to nearby communities such as Lockett. The paper's curious name can be traced to two possible sources: 1) a colloquial expression

[ABOUT](#) [BROWSE](#)

Better:

Jefferson Jimplecute



First published in 1900 by the team of Ward Taylor, Jr. and his daughter Marion, the *Jimplecute* was one of Marion County's most influential publications, and survives today as Texas's fifth oldest newspaper. It primarily served the town of Jefferson, but also circulated throughout northeast Texas and occasionally addressed its contents to nearby communities such as Lockett.

Added: September 2010.

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To avoid phrases like “this collection features,” plainly list the contents of collection.

Original:

University Records



This collection features budget reports, investment portfolios, and other financial records from the University of North Texas over the last 50 years.

Added: June 2014.

[ABOUT](#) [BROWSE](#)

Better:

University Records



Budget reports, investment portfolios, and other financial records from the University of North Texas over the last 50 years.

Added: June 2014.

[ABOUT](#) [BROWSE](#)

Reword short descriptions to avoid phrases like “this collection features” and indicate restricted items by using boldface type.

Original:

Black Academy of Arts and Letters Materials



This collection features event photographs from the Black Academy of Arts and Letters, Incorporated (TBAAL), a Dallas, Texas based non-profit tax-exempt organization. **Some items in this collection are restricted to use by the UNT community.**

Added: September 2014.

[ABOUT](#) [BROWSE](#)

Better:

Black Academy of Arts and Letters Materials



Event photographs from the Black Academy of Arts and Letters, Incorporated (TBAAL), a Dallas, Texas based non-profit tax-exempt organization. **Some items in this collection are restricted to use by the UNT community.**

Added: September 2014.

[ABOUT](#) [BROWSE](#)

When the short description focuses more on the partner than on the collection, reword to focus on important information about the collection. Incorporate special funding into the short description.

Original:

Archer County Newspaper Collection



The Archer County Newspaper Collection has been added to The Portal to Texas History through the work of the Archer Public Library. Known as the "Short Grass Ranching Capital of the U.S.," Archer County is a center of the ranching and oil industries.

Added: August 2015.

[ABOUT](#) [BROWSE](#)

Better:

Archer County Newspaper Collection



Made available by a Tocker Foundation grant, the Archer County Newspaper Collection records nearly one hundred years of Archer County history. Known as the "Short Grass Ranching Capital of the U.S.," the county has long been a center for the ranching and oil industries, and these themes are reflected in its newspaper collections.

Added: August 2015.

[ABOUT](#) [BROWSE](#)

Reword short descriptions to avoid phrases such as “[partner] presents.” Also avoid listing the number of items in the collection.

Original:

Abilene Christian University Sermon Charts



Abilene Christian University presents its collection of 78 sermon charts, bed sheets hand painted with text and/or artwork used as a visual aid to a preacher's sermon. This collection dates from the 1900's to the 1970's.

Added: May 2014.

[ABOUT](#) [BROWSE](#)

Better:

Abilene Christian University Sermon Charts



Sermon charts, or bed sheets painted with text and/or artwork, were used as visual aids to preachers' sermons. The sermon charts in this collection date from the 1900s to the 1970s.

Added: May 2014.

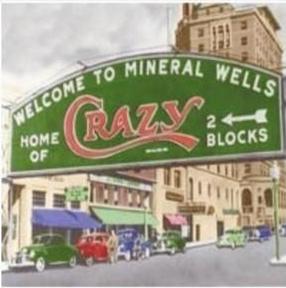
[ABOUT](#) [BROWSE](#)

Organize existing long descriptions by using headings.

Original:

You Are Here: / home / explore / collections / a.f.weaver.collection

A. F. Weaver Collection

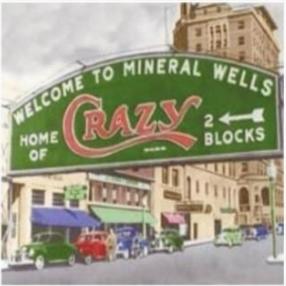


This colorful panorama covers the founding of Mineral Wells through its mercurial growth as a resort center and army town up to the present. A. F. Weaver was a photographer and local historian, and the collection includes photographs that he took as well as photographs he copied from local families and established research sources.

Better:

You Are Here: / home / explore / collections / a.f.weaver.collection

A. F. Weaver Collection



This colorful panorama covers the founding of Mineral Wells through its mercurial growth as a resort center and army town up to the present.

About the Photographer

A.F. Weaver was a photographer and local historian, and his collections include photographs that he took as well as photographs he copied from local families and established research sources

About the Collection

The history and growth of Mineral Wells has been chronicled in multiple facets through this collection. It features pictures of buildings such as churches and stores as well as landscape shots of a growing town. The artwork, postcards, and other written objects also provide a glimpse into bygone eras of this Texas town.

ABOUT

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Use headings to break up long descriptions.

Original:

You Are Here: / home / explore / collections / abilene photograph collection

Abilene Photograph Collection



The Abilene Photograph Collection consists of over 10,000 images that range from the early twentieth century to the present. The copy collection was started in 1981 with most of the copies added to the collection by 2000. The collection has a delightful assortment of images of community members, homes, businesses, churches and ranches. The collection details Abilene's rich history, capturing a multitude of public events in Abilene and surrounding areas.

The Abilene Photograph Collection began in 1981 with grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Texas Committee for the Humanities, Moody Foundation, Abilene Cultural Affairs Council, and Hardin-Simmons University. The collection started as a copy collection of locally held photographs of regional significance. Collections were borrowed, copies made, the owner's identification data recorded, and then the original images were returned to the lender.

Dr. B. W. Aston, Senior Professor of History at HSU, did most of the copy work using a Polaroid MP-4 Land Camera. Dr. Fane Downs, Professor of History at McMurry University, worked with the Apple IIe computer to build the database of numbers and descriptors. Dr. Joe Dahlstrom, Dean of Libraries, accepted the collection into the Richardson Library and worked with the community ...

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You Are Here: / home / explore / collections / abilene photograph collection

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The Abilene Photograph Collection consists of over 10,000 images that range from the early twentieth century to the present. The copy collection was started in 1981 with most of the copies added to the collection by 2000. The collection has a delightful assortment of images of community members, homes, businesses, churches and ranches. It details Abilene's rich history, capturing a multitude of public events in Abilene and surrounding areas.

Funding

The Abilene Photograph Collection began in 1981 with grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Texas Committee for the Humanities, Moody Foundation, Abilene Cultural Affairs Council, and Hardin-Simmons University. The collection started as a copy collection of locally held photographs of regional significance. Collections were borrowed, copies made, the owner's identification data recorded, and then the original images were returned to the lender.

About the Creators

Dr. B. W. Aston, Senior Professor of History at HSU, did most of the copy work using a Polaroid MP-4 Land Camera. Dr. Fane Downs, Professor of History at McMurry University, worked with the Apple IIe computer to build the database of numbers and descriptors. Dr. Joe Dahlstrom, Dean of Libraries, accepted the collection into the Richardson Library and worked with the community to find significant photographs.

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When the listing of partners is unavoidable, use bulleted lists to organize information.

Original:

You Are Here: / home / explore / collections / rescuing texas history, 2009

Rescuing Texas History, 2009



Rescuing Texas History 2009, presents local history materials from sixteen partners: Arlington Public Library & Fielder House, Austin History Center, Bee County Historical Commission, Dallas Municipal Archives, El Paso Public Library, French Legation Museum, Matthews Land & Cattle Company, LBJ Museum of San Marcos, Northeast Lakeview College, Permian Basin Petroleum Museum, Library & Hall of Fame, Port Arthur Public Library, River Valley Pioneer Museum, Stephen F. Austin Association, University of Texas at San Antonio, and University of Houston-Victoria Library. Funding was provided by the Summerlee Foundation of Dallas.

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Better:

You Are Here: / home / explore / collections / rescuing texas history, 2009

Rescuing Texas History, 2009



The 2009 edition of Rescuing Texas History brings together photographs, oral histories, artwork, letters, and more. The collection houses over 5,000 items and gives a glimpse into the diverse people that made Texas their home over the years. Funding was provided by the Sumerlee Foundation of Dallas.

The items in this collection come from a variety of partners:

- Arlington Public Library & Fielder House
- Austin History Center
- Bee County Historical Commission
- Dallas Municipal Archives
- El Paso Public Library
- French Legation Museum
- Matthews Land & Cattle Company
- LBJ Museum of San Marcos
- Northeast Lakeview College
- Permian Basin Petroleum Museum
- Library & Hall of Fame
- Port Arthur Public Library
- River Valley Pioneer Museum
- Stephen F. Austin Association
- University of Texas at San Antonio
- University of Houston-Victoria Library

When revising both short and long descriptions for the same collection, focus on key facts about the collection in the short description and incorporate any special funding. Use headings in the long description to create structure and a logical flow of information.

Original short description:

Alto Herald



The Stella Hill Memorial Library presents its collection of the weekly newspaper, The Alto Herald. The issues presented cover the period from 1909-1966. Hard copies and microfilm have long been a favorite research source, but digitization, funded by the Tocker Foundation, will make the material more readily available to the public.

Added: February 2012.

[ABOUT](#) [BROWSE](#)

Better short description:

Alto Herald



These issues of The Alto Herald cover the time period from 1909-1966 and chronicle the rich history of one of the oldest towns in East Texas. Digitization efforts for this collection were made possible by a grant from the Tocker Foundation.

Added: February 2012.

[ABOUT](#) [BROWSE](#)

Original long description:

You Are Here / [home](#) / [explore](#) / [collections](#) / [alto herald](#)

Alto Herald



Although Alto had a newspaper as early as 1893, no issues prior to 1909 are still in existence. The first newspaper published in Alto of which we have good information was the Alto News. It was owned by Dr. J. W. Teague and published by Charles J. Matthews between 1893 and 1897. The newspaper was sold to J. T. Ahearn, who sold it to J. E. Shook. Later the paper was sold to the Rev. S.M. Thompson, a Methodist minister, and the name was changed to the Alto Herald. During the period of the digitized archives ownership was successively Thomas M. McClure, Elbert Allen, Frank L. Weimar, and Frank Ed Weimar.

The Alto Herald was purchased August 1, 1978, by E. H. Whitehead Enterprises, Inc. of Rusk, that also owned the Rusk newspaper. The Whiteheads published the Alto Herald as a separate newspaper until April 1989 when it was merged with the Rusk Cherokeean, which has the distinction of being the oldest continuously operating weekly newspaper in Texas.

In 1982, with the financial support of Robert McClure, former resident of Alto, the Alto Herald archives through 1966 were microfilmed by Microfilm Services of Tyler. A grant from the Tocker ...

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Better long description:

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Alto Herald



Alto is one of the oldest towns in East Texas, and by virtue of being on the celebrated El Camino Real, has witnessed much Texas history.

About the Newspaper

Although Alto had a newspaper as early as 1893, no issues prior to 1909 are still in existence. The first newspaper published in Alto of which we have good information was the Alto News. It was owned by Dr. J. W. Teague and published by Charles J. Matthews between 1893 and 1897. The newspaper was sold to J. T. Ahearn, who sold it to J. E. Shook. Later the paper was sold to the Rev. S.M. Thompson, a Methodist minister, and the name was changed to the Alto Herald. During the period of the digitized archives ownership was successively Thomas M. McClure, Elbert Allen, Frank L. Weimar, and Frank Ed Weimar.

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Digitization

In 1982, with the financial support of former Alto resident Robert McClure, *The Alto Herald* archives through 1966 were microfilmed by Microfilm Services of Tyler. A Tocker Foundation grant made the digitization of this film possible.

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