2008-2009 Smathers Libraries Mini Grant
APPLICATION COVER SHEET
Application due: October 1, 2008

Project Investigator Name: Thomas R. Caswell
Department: Architecture & Fine Arts Library
Email address: tcaswell@ufl.edu
Phone: 352-273-2805

Additional applicants, please give name and email for each:

Title of grant: Historic St. Augustine Block and Lot Files Digitization

Project abstract (no more than 100 words):

This proposal requests funds to digitize the majority (85%) of the Historic St. Augustine Block and Lot Files. Started in the early 1960s, the files provided historical information to guide Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board (HSAPB) administrators in the purchase and development of the colonial town and properties. Documents include historic interpretation notes, architectural sketches, drawings, archaeological field reports, maps and photographs related to historic St. Augustine. The materials are of particular interest to researchers in architecture, historical archaeology, museum studies, tourism studies, historic preservation and restoration, as well as to those generally interested in the history of St. Augustine.

Funds requested (Limit of $5,000): $5,000

Describe how the 10% mandatory cost share will be met:

Mandatory cost share will be met through labor associated with one Digital Library Center permanent staff employee who will create digitized images of approximately 50 oversized documents within the Block and Lot Files using a photo stand.

Please list the library resources to be used in this project and the name of the person authorizing the intended use and date authorized. If you need more room, continue on a separate page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Authorizing Individual</th>
<th>Date Authorized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital Library Center equipment</td>
<td>Erich Kesse (see attached)</td>
<td>18 Sep 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Library Center equipment</td>
<td>Laurie Taylor (see attached)</td>
<td>29 Sep 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have my Department Head's approval to submit this application. X Yes ___ No

Signature: [Signature]
Date: 29 Sep 2008
Confirming my agreement.

You probably know this, ...
If you do pursue this, be sure to contact the St. Augustine Historical Society and the Florida National Guard if not also the Fort. All have an interest in seeing this work done. All can write letters.
Be sure as well to visit your ideas upon Jim Cusick.

Erich

-----Original Message-----
From: Tom Caswell
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2008 5:10 PM
To: Erich Kesse
Subject: Mini-grant for block & lot files?
Importance: High

With your blessing I would like to pursue the Libraries' mini-grant to get the Block and Lot Files digitized .... From my best estimate it can be done with a library mini-grant as it's about 13 linear feet, comprised of about 10,000-12,000 various field notes, memos, photos, etc. Let me know if you would agree to this pursuit as it will require the use of Digital Library Center equipment and staff.

-Tom.

Thomas Reed Caswell
Architecture and Fine Arts Library
POB 117017 | Gainesville | FL | 32611-7017
ph: 352.273.2805 | fx: 352.846.2747
e-mail: tcaswell@ufl.edu

9/29/2008
Dear Tom -

Your project looks wonderful from the materials we've seen so far and it will surely serve the graduate programs in historic preservation and architecture, among others. The DLC looks forward to working with you and supporting you in this project.

Best,
Laurie N. Taylor
Digital Library Center
University of Florida Libraries
www.uflib.ufl.edu/UFDC

On Mon, Sep 29, 2008 at 1:57 PM, Tom Caswell <tomcasw@uflib.ufl.edu> wrote:
> Laurie -
> 
> I would like to pursue the Libraries' mini-grant to get the majority
> of the Block and Lot Files digitized .... From my best estimate, most
> of it can be digitized with a library mini-grant as it's about 13
> linear feet of material, comprised of about 10,000-12,000 various
> field notes, memos, photos, etc. Let me know if you agree to this
> pursuit, as it will require the use of Digital Library Center
> equipment and staff. I have already confirmed with and gotten approval
> from Erich. Thank you for your consideration.
> 
> -Tom.
> 
> Thomas Reed Caswell
> Architecture and Fine Arts Library
> POB 117017 | Gainesville | FL | 32611-7017
> ph: 352.273.2805 | fx: 352.846.2747
> email: tcaswell@ufl.edu
> 
>
Go for it.

Pat

-----Original Message-----
From: Tom Caswell
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2008 11:04 AM
To: Patrick Reakes
Cc: Ann Lindell
Subject: Mini-grant application
Importance: High

Pat -

As my current chair, I need to have your confirmed approval to submit a mini-grant proposal.

I would like to apply for one of the Libraries' mini-grants (http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/committees/grants/ — up to $5,000) in hopes that I can get the digitization of the Block & Lot files from the Government House library in St. Augustine nearer to completion. I've already done a small handful with the help of the Digital Library Center [http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ufdc/?s=hsa&f=hbtall]. I don't know that I'll be able to digitize ALL of the collection (13 linear feet of various field notes, photographs, architectural drawings, photocopies and ephemera) with the mini-grant, but I think it'd be a nice seed to plant and help get me started in terms of grant opportunities, etc. for this collection and possibly others.

Here is a brief description I am starting with to describe the materials:

"The files include thousands of pages of historic interpretation notes, architectural sketches, archaeological field reports and photographs related to properties in the historic district of St. Augustine. The files were originally set up in the early 1960s to provide historical information to guide administrators in the purchase and development of the colonial town and properties. These materials are of particular interest to those in architecture, archaeology, museum studies, tourism studies, historic preservation and restoration, as well as to those interested in the history of St. Augustine."

Let me know if I have your approval to apply. A reply to this email would certainly suffice. Thanks!

--Tom.

Thomas Reed Caswell
Architecture and Fine Arts Library
POB 117017 | Gainesville | FL | 32611-7017
ph: 352.273.2805 | fax: 352.846.2747
email: tcaswell@ufl.edu
A. Describe the project:

The Historic St. Augustine Block and Lot Files contain approximately 10,000-12,000 pages of historic interpretation notes, architectural sketches, drawings, archaeological field reports, maps and photographs related to properties in the historic district of St. Augustine (see Appendix A: Physical Description). The files were originally set up in the early 1960s to provide historical information to guide Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board (HSAPB) administrators in the purchase and development of the colonial town and properties. Data and reports on specific properties were filed according to a "Block and Lot" classification system using a 1923 official map of the city of St. Augustine Historic District (see Appendix B: Block and Lot Map). Each property or site would then be linked to or filed by a specific lot number within a certain block. The files were maintained and added to over the years by each successive Preservation Board and housed within the Government House Library in downtown St. Augustine.

The proposal at hand seeks funding for a pilot project to hire temporary staff to scan, enter associated descriptive data and provide quality control for a majority (85%) of the Block and Lot Files digitization. This percentage is a benchmark calculated by the Principal Investigator and staff from the DLC based on scanning time and effort for a small sample of documents from the Block and Lot Files. Prioritization of files to be scanned will be made by the PI according to historic significance of sites found within the Block and Lot Files. Materials will be digitized according to current practice and procedures used by the Digital Library Center (DLC). Once the files have been digitized, they will become the backbone of the DLC's "Historic St. Augustine" online collection (http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ufdc/?s=hsa1) which currently serves as a proposed template for this and future collections related to Historic St. Augustine research material. The resulting digitized files and associated descriptive data will be searchable by keyword as well as by specific block and lot numbers, making the contents of the Block and Lot Files collection easily retrievable and user-friendly.

B. Value of project:

Being that the majority of the Block and Lot Files are primary source materials (drawings, field notes, manuscripts and government documents), digitization of these materials will bring universal access to thousands of pages of data and images that have been heretofore inaccessible only to persons officially working in or visiting the Government House Library in St. Augustine. The digitization of these files at this point in time is extremely timely as it coincides with the University of Florida's increasing involvement with St. Augustine as UF was granted, by Florida legislative action in 2007, the eventual stewardship of the Government House and 32 other properties in the historic district (http://www.facilities.ufl.edu/staugustine/index.htm).

In terms of supporting the academic endeavors of UF, the invaluable information contained within the Block and Lot Files are of particular interest to faculty and students directly involved in research projects and master's- and PhD-seeking programs in architecture, historical archaeology, museum studies, tourism studies, historic preservation and other disciplines across campus. By digitizing these files, the UF Libraries will contribute greatly to its basic goal of meeting the information needs of the immediate UF community and beyond.

The delicate nature of some of these materials due to age or physical format (e.g. onion skin paper) also makes their digitization paramount and ensures the contents' preservation and use by current and future researchers. If funded, this pilot project would serve as a seed grant to future funding possibilities as other archives and repositories of information relating to historic St. Augustine are uncovered.
C. Resources needed:

In addition to the funding being requested to hire temporary staff for the scanning and description of the materials, resources needed for the success of this pilot project include: the DLC's existing equipment and established procedures for digitizing archival materials; predetermined time and labor (through cost share) of a DLC permanent staff employee who will create digitized images of approximately 50 oversized documents within the Block and Lot Files using a photo stand; and the time and labor of the PI who will oversee all aspects of the digitization project.

D. Plan of action:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 2008</td>
<td>Meet with Libraries Human Resources office to create position description for OPS graduate student position with a December 1st posting deadline</td>
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<td>December 2008</td>
<td>Interview candidates for position and make hiring decision by December 19th</td>
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<td>January 2009</td>
<td>Training begins for student January 2nd; PI begins culling of Block and Lot Files to be scanned; Box #1: descriptive data entered into DLC tracking database, scanning and quality control completed by end of month, oversized drawings pulled and digitized</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2009</td>
<td>Box #2: descriptive data entered, scanning and quality control completed, oversized drawings pulled and digitized. Optical character recognition and digital archiving completed for Box #1.</td>
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<td>March 2009 (spring break)</td>
<td>Box #3: descriptive data entered, scanning and quality control completed, oversized drawings pulled and digitized. Optical character recognition and digital archiving completed for Box #2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2009</td>
<td>Boxes #4 and #5: descriptive data entered, scanning and quality control completed, oversized drawings pulled and digitized. Optical character recognition and digital archiving completed for Box #3. Mid-term progress report due to Libraries' Grants Management Committee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2009</td>
<td>Boxes #6 and #7: descriptive data entered, scanning and quality control completed, oversized drawings pulled and digitized. Optical character recognition and digital archiving completed for Box #4 and #5.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2009</td>
<td>Boxes #8 and #9: descriptive data entered, scanning and quality control completed, oversized drawings pulled and digitized. Optical character recognition and digital archiving completed for Box #6 and #7.</td>
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<td>July 2009</td>
<td>Boxes #10 and #11: descriptive data entered, scanning and quality control completed, oversized drawings pulled and digitized. Optical character recognition and digital archiving completed for Box #8 and #9.</td>
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<td>August 2009</td>
<td>Box #12: descriptive data entered, scanning and quality control completed, oversized drawings pulled and digitized. Optical character recognition and digital archiving completed for Box #10 and #11. Database cleanup and testing. Identification of other archival collections in Government House Library for potential granting opportunities using this pilot digitization project as a core collection.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2009</td>
<td>Promotion and in-class demonstrations of Historic St. Augustine Block and Lot File online collection to faculty and students in various academic programs, as well as to general public users in St. Augustine. Promotion of collection on various listservs, blogs and websites. Complete final assessment report and submit to Libraries Grants Management Committee.</td>
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E. Project success measurements:

Success of this pilot project will depend primarily on the digitization of a majority of the Block and Lot Files material within the funds allotted. A benchmark target of 85% of scanned and described material (approximately 8,500 - 10,200 images) has been set by the PI. Secondary measurements will include: increased use of the online collection through promotion and demonstration of database to various users; incorporation of the collection in research projects of faculty and students in various academic programs at UF; increased awareness of the collection among general public users – especially citizens and researchers in St. Augustine; use of this online collection as a demonstration of potential deliverables for other archival collections and granting opportunities.

F. Budget and cost share data:

2008-2009 Application Budget Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Person</th>
<th>Salary times % of effort</th>
<th>Grant Funds</th>
<th>Cost Share</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Randall Renner (DLC)</td>
<td>$39,970 x 16 weeks x .05 FTE</td>
<td>$5000.00</td>
<td>$614.92</td>
<td>$5614.92</td>
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<td>OPS graduate student</td>
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2. Equipment

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3. Supplies

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4. Travel

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Caswell grant – Page 3
5. Other (services vended, etc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<th>Cost Share</th>
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SUBTOTAL: $0

Total Direct Costs (add subtotals of items 1 through 5)

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<th>Grant Funds</th>
<th>Cost Share</th>
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<tr>
<td>$5000.00</td>
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Appendix A: Physical Description

Name of Collection: Historic St. Augustine Block & Lot Files

Containers: 13 records storage boxes

Quantity: 13 linear feet (approx. 10,000 – 12,000 pages)

Described by: Tom Caswell, 19 September 2008

Contents:

- Manuscripts (95.5% of total pages = approx. 9,550 – 11,460 images):
  - Photocopies
  - Handwritten notes
  - Typed correspondence
  - Government documents, reports & pamphlets
  - Ledger sheets
  - Onion skin carbon copies
  - Dated 1930-2000
  - Single-sided
  - Majority (85%) of material is 8.5" x 11"
  - Mostly text-based
  - Smallest = 2" x 3" handwritten notes; Largest = 24" x 36" architectural drawings
  - Few bindings, mostly stapled or notebooks
  - Illustrated pages:
    - Photocopied images (45% of total pages)
    - Line drawings on graph paper (5%)
    - Photographic prints & slides (4%)
    - Architectural drawings (0.5%)

- Photographic prints & slides (4% of total pages = approx. 400 images):
  - approx. 100 cardboard-mounted sheets, 4 per page, usu. numbered, w/minimal labeling (e.g. "Arrivas house – coquina wall – #162")
  - approx. 100 loose B&W photos, w/minimal labeling
  - approx. 100 loose color photos, w/minimal labeling
  - approx. 100 color slides, w/minimal labeling
  - Smallest = 3" x 5"; Largest = 5" x 7"

- Maps & oversized prints (0.5% of total pages = approx. 50 images):
  - approx. 50 architectural & oversized drawings
  - Single-sided
  - approx. 556-870 sq. inches
  - Longest = 36"
  - Unbound
  - Folded
Appendix B: Block and Lot Map

Cropped image from St. Augustine Historic District Map (ca. 1923)
September 29, 2008

Members of the Grants Management Committee
George A. Smathers Libraries
University of Florida

Dear Distinguished Members,

I am writing to strongly support the application of Thomas Caswell for a mini-grant which will allow him to further his work on the digitization of the "block and lot" files which are part of the collection of the now defunct Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board.

The historical value of these files cannot be estimated. They are the documentary evidence of the historic structures and subsequent additions, reconstructions and site variances of this National Historic Landmark Site. Included in this treasure are thousands of pages of historic interpretation notes, architectural sketches, archaeological field reports and photographs related to properties in the historic district of St. Augustine.

The Historic Preservation Program at UF has been working on projects in St. Augustine for decades and is poised to take an even more active role in researching the city and its historic sites. In the past these files have not been readily available to students and faculty. It is imperative that they be digitized so that the information is used to support historic preservation activities legislated by the Florida Legislature in 2008.

By taking the initiative to begin making this information available in a digitized format, Caswell has already proved his ability to make this goal a reality.

I urge you to support this project.

Sincerely,

Roy Eugene Graham, FAIA, Fellow US/ICOMOS
Beinecke-Reeves Distinguished Professor
Director Historic Preservation Program
College of Design, Construction and Planning

The Foundation for The Gator Nation
September 22, 2008

TO: Smathers Libraries Grant Management Committee

FROM: Kathleen Deagan

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Caswell Minigrant Proposal

I am writing in strong support of the proposal to the University of Florida Library Minigrant competition submitted by Tom Caswell for Digitization of the Lot and Block Files from the Government House Library, St. Augustine.

This is an extremely valuable collection for architects, archaeologists, historian and historic preservation planners. The paper files, generated over the past 50 years, contain thousands of pages of photographs, maps, drawings, manuscript reports and historic interpretation notes that not only document the history, archaeology and architecture of St. Augustine’s buildings, but also document important components of the history of early historic preservation and historical archaeology in Florida.

At present the files (which I have often used) are nearly inaccessible, and much of the material is becoming fragile. The digitization project proposed by Caswell would make these records accessible in an extremely user-friendly way, judging from the records already digitized and available through the UF Digital Library center: (http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ufdc/?s=hsa1&m=hbtall).

I have found the digitized photographic materials, plans and early interpretive schemes completed to date to be extremely useful to me and my students.

This is a particularly appropriate project in the context of the University of Florida’s current and increasing involvement with St. Augustine (http://www.facilities.ufl.edu/staugustine/index.htm). I also expect that these records will become even more important as we approach to 450th anniversary of the founding of St. Augustine 2015, and public interest in St. Augustine grows even greater.

I enthusiastically support this project.

Kathleen Deagan
Distinguished Research Curator and Professor
September 23, 2008

Members of the Grants Management Committee

Dear Committee Members:

I am pleased to write this letter of endorsement and support for the project undertaken by Mr. Thomas Caswell at the University of Florida Library to digitize the "Block and Lot Files" that have been maintained in Government House in St. Augustine for at least the past 48 years.

For some 31 of those years I have been a contributor to and user of those files, along with many other historians, historical archaeologists, and research professionals.

The Block and Lot Files contain the collective work of numerous scholars who have investigated property records, manuscripts, wills, correspondence of various colonial officials, publications of all kinds and other documents that may have shed light on properties and the people who owned and inhabited them throughout St. Augustine's recorded history, particularly during the colonial era.

Having been assembled in one way or another over the course of perhaps as many as 75 years, since the start of St. Augustine's Restoration Era in the mid-1930s, these files are one of a kind. Assembling a duplicate body of historical documentation about St. Augustine could not be done, for in many cases the source materials for many of the documents have probably disappeared or could not be reassembled, such as, for example, those records that resulted from interviews or from the memories of the scholars who made the contributions.

This project will assure preservation of the files as well as allow scholars to investigate a body of source material that, for the most part, has until now remained unavailable to them. I have for many of my years worried about the files, knowing they were unique. Please support this project!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

William R. Adams, Ph.D.
Director

48 King Street, 32084 - PO Box 210, 32085 - Office 904/825-5033 - FAX 904/825-5096
September 26, 2008

University of Florida Libraries Grant Management Committee.
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32211

I am pleased to offer my support for the Smathers Libraries Mini-Grant application submitted by Thomas Caswell of the Architecture and Fine Arts Library to digitize the "Lot and Block Files" compiled by the Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board.

I worked with these files and contributed material to them during my 11 years as research historian for the Preservation Board and can attest that they are a very valuable resource. Much of the value of the collection is that the material is organized according to specific properties. Just last week I inquired at Government House about using the files.

The files are at peril because of deterioration. Much of the information was originally recorded on re-used or low-quality paper. Now, a half of a century later, we still look to the files for research, but now to use them is almost to destroy them. I strongly recommend the funding of this grant application to preserve this collection.

Sincerely,

Susan R. Parker, Ph.D.
Executive Director
September 23, 2008

Members of the Grants Management Committee

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing this letter of support for the project undertaken by Mr. Thomas Caswell at the University of Florida Library to digitize the “Block and Lot Files” that are maintained in Government House in St. Augustine.

As director of research for the Historic St. Augustine Preservation & Restoration Commission, beginning in 1961, I established the Block and Lot File in order to incorporate research files that had been accumulating in one repository or another within the city for the preceding quarter century. At the same time, a number of historians and other research professionals were conducting research to support the beginning effort to restore the colonial city as part of the 400th anniversary project.

The resulting repository, which we named the Block and Lot File, accordingly contains the assembled work of many scholars and research professionals. It can never be reassembled. It shall prove invaluable for continuing research in the colonial history of the city. It needs to be preserved.

Please support this project.

Sincerely,

Robert Steinbach

Robert Steinbach