Earlier this fall, Western’s Multimedia Archives Based Electronic Library (MABEL) became available to the university and broader community. This central repository allows for online discovery, sharing, and preservation of Western's digital assets, which include images, video and sound recordings, and textual documents. You can check out MABEL now at the following link: mabel.wwu.edu.

MABEL was developed to provide increased and improved access to online digital content in support of communications, research, and teaching & learning activities. It also supports more effective “behind the scenes” management of unique materials and valuable digital assets created by or managed by Heritage Resources and other contributing departments of Western. It is the result of an intensive, multi-year cross-campus university partnership involving numerous stakeholders, content creators, archivists, and library professionals.

Specific Heritage Resources collections currently in MABEL include:
- Associated Students of WWU Archival Records
- Board of Trustees of WWU Meeting Minutes
- Campus History Collection
- Charts & Engravings of Vancouver’s Expeditions
- Galen Biery Photographs
- Klipsun Yearbooks
- KVOS Channel 12 Films
- Vehicle Research Institute Historical Records
- Wallie V. Funk Photographs
- Western Front Historical Collection
- WWU Centennial Oral History Project Records
- Women’s Recreation Association Records
- And many more!

We are also continuing to develop new collections as well as migrating legacy content over to the new platform.

~ “MABEL” continued on page 4
As Western’s academic year moves into full swing, I am reminded of how fortunate I am to work in a profession dedicated to the documentation of history, the arts, and the natural environment. In this work I am supported by a dedicated and passionate staff who provide stewardship of the university’s archival, manuscript, and rare book collections, and work collectively to preserve and make accessible a range of historical resources for use by our faculty, students, and community members. This work happens across three divisions: the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, University Archives, and Special Collections. Each unit holds unique materials that are critical to understanding the history of our community, region, and world, as well as how Western became the thriving teaching and learning institution we know today.

Providing access to these historical and cultural resources is fundamental to our success. We believe this work is best accomplished in partnership with our patrons and donors, particularly since the materials in our collections also belong to the communities that created them, who have a vested interest in how they are used and interpreted. When we acquire a collection we engage in an act of shared stewardship and public trust. Within that context, we recognize that our community increasingly expects to find these historical resources online using the best technology available.

In these pages you will read of a new and exciting access tool, MABEL, that will exponentially increase public access to a range of digitized content, including photographs, video, and oral histories. I am so proud of the Heritage Resources staff who were and continue to be involved in the development of MABEL. In acknowledgement of this work, the interdisciplinary group that developed the platform recently received Western’s prestigious Team Recognition Award. This award recognizes cooperation and open communication on a collaborative project that makes a significant contribution to the University. GO TEAM MABEL! We will be adding new content regularly, so if you haven’t done so already, check out MABEL and let us know what you think. Happy researching.

~ Elizabeth Joffrion
Director of Heritage Resources

How have changing technologies – from the scroll to the codex, the invention of paper and the printing press, to the inventions of the modern era – changed the ways that Judaism is studied and practiced? What insights can typography offer into Jewish communal identity and relations? What have been the roles of nationalism and romanticism, assimilation and cultural exchange, in the development of Hebrew typography?

Los Angeles-based artist and designer Hillel Smith will give a talk entitled "A Brief History of Jewish Typography" on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 4:00pm in the Wilson Reading Room. Through a multimedia presentation, Smith will cover the four thousand year development of the Hebrew alphabet from its invention to the present, focusing on how technology and geography have shaped the way Jews practice and think about holy texts.

Contact David Schlitt, Judaica Project Archivist, for more information (David.Schlitt@wwu.edu / (360) 650-3193).
In addition to making digital content more readily available online through the MABEL platform, Heritage Resources' staff have also used the OMEKA platform to offer several online exhibits featuring curated selections from our collections. These include, for example, “Through the Lens of Wallie V. Funk,” an introduction to photographs taken by the noted and prolific Pacific Northwest journalist. During his career, Funk photographed a diverse and eclectic range of subjects, including several U.S. Presidents, the Beatles’ and Rolling Stones’ concerts in Seattle, the 1970 Penn Cove whale capture, community events, and military activities on Whidbey Island.

Another online exhibit entitled “Plenty of Things to Do” explores the work and legacy of award-winning children’s author and illustrator Doris Burn. A longtime resident of the San Juan Islands, Doris (Wernstedt) Burn was a self-taught writer and artist who sought specifically to engage with the needs, interests, and creativity of a younger audience. Her work has proven beloved across generations, including the 1965 classic Andrew Henry’s Meadow, as well as much-loved favorites The Summerfolk and The Tale of Lazy Lizard Canyon. The exhibit features Burn’s original manuscripts and artistic works, inviting viewers of all ages to consider and enjoy the ways in which her creative output continues to connect and inspire as classic children’s book writing and illustration.

A selection of primary sources related to the development of Bellingham, created in 2003-2004 in conjunction with the Bellingham Centennial celebrations, is also available online. This carefully selected assortment of historical photographs, maps, and documents provides a sense of local and regional history from over a century ago. The site also presents suggested lesson plans which educators and students may use to supplement and enhance their teaching, learning, and research activities.

Efforts to develop our online exhibits are ongoing. Western student Annie Avila is currently engaged in an independent study project that utilizes existing digitized sources and text from our recent “To the Mountaintop: a Social History of Mountaineering,” which explores the complex relationship between mountaineering and issues of gender, race, and class. Annie summarizes her time spent on the project as follows: "Working with OMEKA to digitize 'To the Mountaintop' has been such an enlightening and fulfilling experience. Technology is the future of history, material culture, and special collections; being a part of that movement is going to ensure that history and exhibitions are available for all people to learn from. And, the skills I’ve gained will directly feed into my career goals in which I hope to work in the museum or special collections environment."

Heritage Resources’ OMEKA exhibits can be viewed at the following link: heritageresources.omeka.net/exhibits.
Content in MABEL can be used to support and enable:

- Academic and scholarly research
- Primary source instruction
- Preservation of digital assets
- Marketing & outreach activities

The name MABEL is in part an homage to Mabel Zoe Wilson, Western's first full-time librarian and the namesake of the Wilson Library building, which is still part of Western Libraries' main complex. Mabel Zoe Wilson served as librarian from 1902-1945. Tasked with creating a library from virtually nothing, she worked for over four decades to grow, catalog, and organize the collections, initiate services, and teach students effective library use.

Work to further develop and refine MABEL will continue as a team of web developers and content experts make additional improvements. Interested in providing feedback to help enhance the display and function of MABEL? Feel free to contact us at grp.mabel.training@wwu.edu.

URL for more information: mabel.wwu.edu.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank our volunteers and student employees for all they do in support of Heritage Resources. We would also like to thank the many individuals, families, and organizations who have made generous monetary gifts and contributions of collection materials. To donate to Heritage Resources, please email Elizabeth.Joffrion@wwu.edu or phone 360-650-3283. Donations can also be made online or by mail to the Western Foundation, MS-9034, Western Washington University, 516 High St, Bellingham, WA 98225-9034. Please designate your contribution to Western Libraries and identify “Heritage Resources” as the program you wish to support.