



A periodic report from  
THE NATIONAL DIGITAL LIBRARY PROGRAM  
THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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*Time Magazine rates the Web Sites*

## Library of Congress: A "Best Web Site of 1996"

**T**he American Memory historical collections, available from the Library, are among "the best Web sites of 1996," according to *Time* magazine in its Dec. 23 issue.

Calling the site a "treasure trove of memorabilia converted into easily downloadable recordings, images and text," the magazine made special mention of the Mathew Brady Civil War photographs, the Houdini Collection and Walt Whitman's notebooks.

"The Library is honored to be recognized as a major contributor to the intellectual content of this electronic era," said Librarian of Congress James H. Billington. "We are firmly committed to making universally accessible our rich holdings to help revitalize education and literacy nationwide."

The Library also has been cited for its Web site's excellence by the Great American Web Site, which bills itself as "a citizen's guide to the treasures of the U.S. government on the World Wide Web."

The Library was recognized in the "Best Agency or Department Web Sites" category along with the sites of the Departments of State, Commerce and Defense, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Smithsonian Institution.

In the "Ten Best Individual Web Sites" category, the American Memory collections were called "the most wonderful of the Library's efforts, in a plan to digitize the greatest storehouse of knowledge in the world." American Memory took top honors in the "Best Sites to Explore U.S. History" category.

These citations are only among the most recent to be garnered by the Library for its electronic efforts. For ex-

ample, the Library's Web site was among the six finalists in the "Education" category of the National Information Infrastructure (NII) Awards Program, one of the leading forums for the recognition of "extraordinary achievement" on the Internet.

American Memory, one of 60 finalists in 10 categories, was chosen from a field of nearly 1,000 nominees. The NII Awards Program recognizes work in 10 categories that "touch on all areas of America's work, play and community life."

American Memory (<http://www.loc.gov/>) is a project that aims to make freely available on the Internet millions of rare and unique Library of Congress items relating to American history. Current on-line collections include selected Civil War photographs of Mathew Brady; papers and photographs donated by Harry Houdini; daguerreotype photographs; documents relating to slavery, the civil rights movement and women's suffrage; sound recordings of political leaders; and early motion pictures of vaudeville acts, the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 and other subjects.

"The finalist award to American Memory is an outstanding achievement and a real acknowledgment of the Library of Congress's creativity in using electronic communications to create new possibilities," said James Hake, Chairman of the NII Awards Program. "The Library serves as an example of the kind of leadership and dedication that are critical to our continued development as an information-era society."

The NII Awards are supported by more than 70 sponsors. More information about the NII Awards is available at <http://www.gii-awards.com>.

*Competition attracts more than 75 applications*

## Library/Ameritech NDL Competition Progresses

**Winners of the Library/Ameritech competition will have their collections placed in the American Memory collection, a popular Web site.**

The 1996 Library of Congress/Ameritech National Digital Library Competition generated more than 75 eligible applications, which are currently being evaluated by a blue-ribbon panel.

"We are gratified that the response to the Library of Congress/Ameritech National Digital Library Competition has been so positive, judging by the number of applications and the variety of institutions that have proposed projects for digitization," said Librarian of Congress James H. Billington.

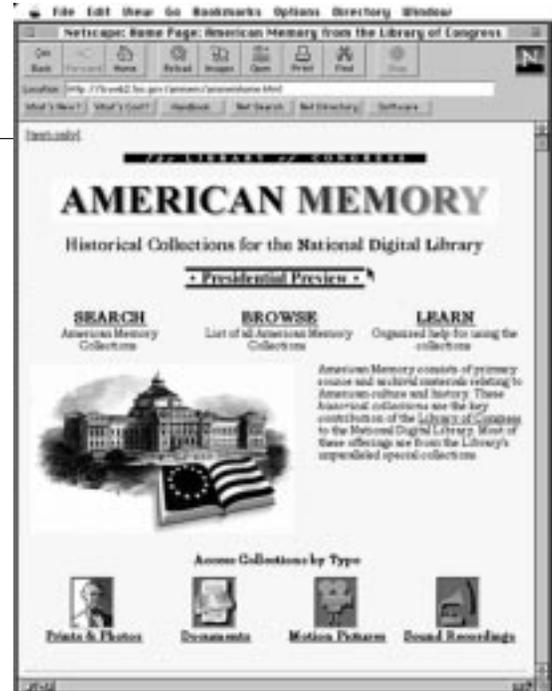
The two groups designated in the competition—institutions that belong to the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and those that do not—are well represented among the applications. Thirty-two applications, or approximately 42 percent, are from ARL members, and 44 applications, approximately 58 percent, are from non-ARL institutions. The applications come from institutions in 31 states.

For the first year of the competition, preference is being given to collections from the period 1850–1920.

"We are delighted that so many libraries have caught the vision of this important movement," said Lana Porter, President and CEO of Ameritech Library Services. "And we are proud that the Ameritech Foundation has elected to sponsor this gift of information to the world."

While the Library of Congress has taken responsibility for administering the review process for the competition, Library staff will not be members of the panels evaluating the applications. The applications will be reviewed by a series of three independent panels that will make the assessments, leading to the announcement of the final winners at the end of March 1997.

The first panel will assess the historical significance and the breadth of interest of the proposals; a second panel will review the technical viability of the proposals for digitization. Evalu-



ators from these first two panels will be convened by the director of the Division of Preservation and Access at the National Endowment for the Humanities. A third panel, to be convened by the president of the Council on Library Resources and the Commission on Preservation and Access, will select the final winners from those proposals recommended most highly by the two prior panels.

The Library of Congress has thus ensured that experienced historians, teachers and librarians from a variety of institutions—who will be among the ultimate users of these digital materials—will make the judgments concerning significance and utility.

Eight to 10 awards of up to \$75,000 will be announced this spring, for projects that complement or augment the digitized collections already available from the National Digital Library Program at <http://www.loc.gov/>. Awards will also be made in 1998 and 1999, based on applications submitted in 1997 and 1998.

The Library of Congress/Ameritech National Digital Library Competition is made possible by a \$2 million gift from Ameritech to the Library. The competition is open to any U.S. institution (except federal institutions) wanting to digitize and place on the Internet collections relating to American history and culture.

## Library Expands Public Access to Internet in its Reading Rooms

The Library of Congress has increased the number of public access terminals in its reading rooms that provide free access to the Internet.

In five reading rooms and the Computer Catalog Center, the Library now provides unlimited access to the Internet for all those permitted to do research in the Library.

"I am very proud of this new, expanded service at the Library of Congress," said Associate Librarian for Library Services Winston Tabb. "We have been such a world leader in the development of digital library content that it is only appropriate for us to be expanding access to digital resources in our own library."

These initial 10 stations in six locations represent the first phase of this effort. The reading rooms are Prints and Photographs in the Madison Building; Hispanic, Local History and Genealogy and Main Reading Room in the Jefferson Building; and Science in the Adams Building. The Computer Catalog Center is in the Jefferson Building.

These have been added to augment the public access workstation made available in the Madison Building's Newspaper and Current Periodicals Reading Room in 1993.

Researchers now have access to a wide range of Internet functions and media. Said Diane Kresh, acting Director for Public Service Collections, "We are delighted that we are able to expand reading room service to our users. There is a powerful advantage for researchers being in both the digital and the artifactual library at the same time. Resource possibilities become limitless, and public service improves exponentially."

The Library has had a direct Internet connection for more than six years and has been providing Internet services for more than four years to researchers outside the institution: In 1992 an anonymous FTP site was established,

and several e-mail discussion groups were created. In 1993 the Library created a Gopher service called LC MARVEL. That year also marked the release of LOCIS over the Internet. LOCIS (Library of Congress Information System) has been widely available on site for research since 1977; it comprises the complete on-line catalog and many other files, including files for copyright information, federal legislation, science bibliographies, records for materials for those unable to read standard print, and selected legal citations and articles from some foreign countries. In 1994 the Library began its National Digital Library Program, whose initiatives are available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.loc.gov/>. Among its offerings are the American Memory historical collections and THOMAS, a congressional information service.

Although LOCIS has been available for many years to researchers in the Library's reading rooms, technical and other constraints, such as legal issues, prevented the provision of widespread access to the Library's other electronic services.

LC MARVEL, LC Web and the anonymous FTP site provide not only access to a wealth of information about the Library of Congress and its activities, but also to digital collections, various ways to search the Library's on-line catalog and links to numerous sites elsewhere on the Internet.

Addresses for other on-line initiatives are:

LOCIS:

<telnet://locis.loc.gov> or <tn3270://locis.loc.gov>

LC MARVEL:

<gopher://marvel.loc.gov>

Anonymous FTP:

<ftp://ftp.loc.gov>

These services can also be reached through the main home page at <http://www.loc.gov/>.

*In five reading rooms and the Computer Catalog Center, the Library now provides unlimited access to the Internet for all those permitted to do research in the Library.*

*"State Libraries" Home Page Established*

## New Site Links Library of Congress to 50 States

A new home page from the Library of Congress provides links to state libraries, library agencies and commissions in all 50 states. The State Libraries page is accessible from the Library's main home page, available at <http://www.loc.gov/>. The new page is a cooperative initiative of the Library of Congress (LC) and the American Library Association (ALA) in an effort to strengthen LC's ties to the library community as well as its largest association, ALA.

"The Library of Congress is eager to simplify access to the major state libraries, library agencies and commissions with its new home page," said Librarian of Congress James H. Billington. "Now, users have a set of links that quickly connects them to the resources of their home state and those of other states."

The Library of Congress also received cooperation from the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) in designing the page and determining appropriate sites for links.

"The input of ALA and COSLA was essential to the implementation of the State Libraries home page," said Associate Librarian for Library Services Winston Tabb. "This new page provides tangible, as well as virtual, links between the Library of Congress and the nation's libraries."

The information from state libraries supplements other state information offered by the Library of Congress home pages of the Newspaper and Current Periodicals Reading Room (<http://lcweb.loc.gov/global/ncp/ncp.html/>) and the Center for the Book (<http://lcweb.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/>).

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