



## Intro to Digitizing Photos for Cultural Heritage (A5)

*Matt Wheeler, Digital Collections Curator and Kevin Johnson, Photo Archivist*

Digitizing cultural heritage photographs creates exciting opportunities for accessing and sharing collections. It may also be a smart preservation strategy for materials at risk from age and deterioration. However, it entails unique challenges, dovetails with other considerations, costs money, and may seem daunting to the novice. Penobscot Marine Museum has been digitizing photo collections since 2005. Through making mistakes, seeking out professional development, consulting colleagues, trying new approaches, and fundraising, we've built capacity and established a set of practices that align with our goals, current level of expertise, and budget. If you work for a museum, historical society, or other cultural heritage organization that's planning a digital project for the first time, or you're looking to improve your current program, this hands-on course will help you lay the groundwork to get started. Please note that we'll demonstrate workflows with our existing hardware and software to provide sample use cases. The quality and performance of both is very good, and the costs are reasonable. Of course, there are other options which participants can explore on their own.

### Topics Covered:

- Assessing the project
- Shopping for Gear
- Software Options
- Show Me the Money
- The Digital Darkroom
- On Targets
- Best Capture, Best Practice
- Software and Hardware Settings
- Image File Considerations
- Overview of Next Steps: Describing, Sharing, Storing

### Program Benefits:

- Learn how to plan a successful photo digitization project using methodical steps
- Helpful technology recommendations from experienced professionals
- Tips on fundraising
- Practical intro to using hardware and software
- Overview of what to do with digital collections
- Links to additional resources

### Target Audience:

- Museum professionals
- Historical society staff or volunteers

**Experience Level:** Appropriate for both Novice and Intermediate

- Novice - *Has minimal or textbook knowledge without connecting it to the practice*
- Intermediate - *Has basic knowledge of key aspects of the practice*

**Program Fee:** \$60

**Contact Hours:** 2

**Delivery:** Lecture/Hands on

Date	Time	Location	Class Capacity
Friday, Sept 26, 2025	10:00am – 12:00pm	On campus, Penobscot Marine Museum	10
Friday, Feb 20, 2026	10:00am – 12:00pm	Remote via Zoom	25
Friday, Aug 7, 2026	10:00am – 12:00pm	Off Campus, Belfast Free Library	12

**Contact:** For more information, please contact Shelly Patten, Office Manager at 207-548-2529 or [spatten@pmm-maine.org](mailto:spatten@pmm-maine.org).

**Register:** <https://form.jotform.com/250435068978064>

**About the Instructors:**

**Matt Wheeler**

Digital Curator

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Matt Wheeler serves as the Digital Curator at PMM and has been working in the Museum's Photo Archives since 2011. His educational experience includes coursework in digital curation from University of Maine, Orono, as well as ongoing professional development in evolving standards and best practices in the industry. He guides PMM in building sound digital collections with an eye to accessibility and sustainability. Matt grew up in Camden and Lincolnville, living on and appreciating Penobscot Bay, and enjoys engaging audiences in the digital age with stories of Penobscot Bay's cultural heritage. His personal photography explores the rich natural settings of the region.

**Kevin Johnson**

Photo Archivist

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Kevin Johnson earned his bachelor's degree from St. Joseph's University and a Professional Certificate in Photography from the Maine Photographic Workshops. Kevin has served as the Photo Archivist at PMM since 2007 and has grown the Museum's collection to more than 500,000 photographs. Since joining PMM, he has curated or co-curated more than 30 photography exhibits. He is the co-author of *Maine on Glass: The Early Twentieth Century in Glass Plate Photography*, author of the forthcoming *Boothbay Now and Then*, and is a regular contributor to several area publications. Kevin was a co-founder and co-owner of Aarhus Gallery in Belfast. He occasionally finds time to pursue his personal photography.