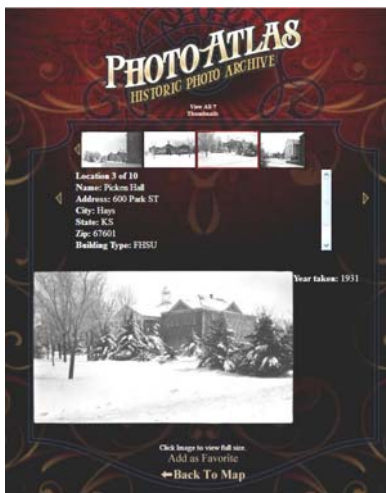
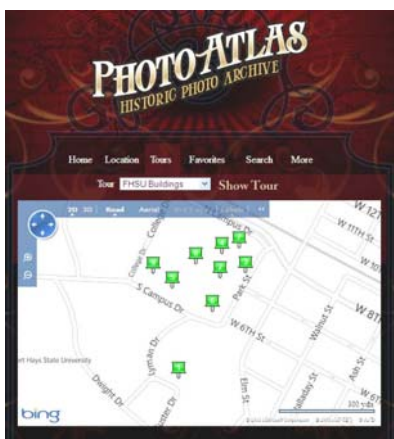


# Preserving the Past in Photos: PhotoAtlas™ and Hays Public Library



Picken Hall, Fort Hays State University



Points on the Fort Hays  
State University PhotoAtlas Tour

**H**ays Public Library serves around 20,000 people, and its Kansas Room offers research opportunities to historians and genealogists. Founded in the 1950's, the Kansas Room is one of the oldest local history rooms in the state of Kansas, with a collection that covers not only Kansas but also the history of the west and the Civil War. Additionally, the Kansas Room houses one of the best collections of George Armstrong Custer, who was stationed at Fort Hays in the 1860's.

**T**he Kansas Room currently holds over 10,000 books as well as vertical files, microfilm and subscriptions to online databases. Between 5000 – 7000 items are used per month. And it has a large collection of photographs that continues to grow.

## Putting Photos Online

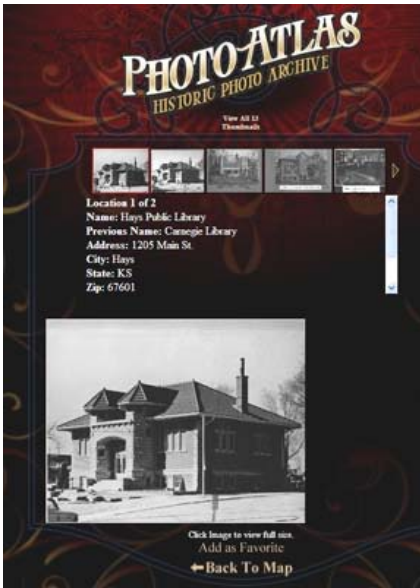
**“S**everal years ago, we had about 1800 photographs digitized and every year I add more photographs to the collection,” said Mary Ann Thompson, Kansas Room Librarian. To put these photos online, the library initially used an open source digital asset management software. “But,” according to Mary Ann, “there wasn't an easy way to add photographs to the archive.”

**M**ary Ann was looking for alternatives. And she found one in Northern Micrographics PhotoAtlas. She received a postcard inviting her to try PhotoAtlas at the 2011 ALA Conference in New Orleans. “My director and I both thought PhotoAtlas might be a good solution. And after learning at ALA that I could easily add information or edit information without knowing code, I was on board.”

**B**eyond how easy PhotoAtlas would be to use, Mary Ann also liked the fact that PhotoAtlas provided a geographical context “I liked the idea of being able to create a homes tour or being able to just call up main street and view those photos.” She was also pleased that the program “was affordable.”

## Setting Up PhotoAtlas

**O**nce the library purchased PhotoAtlas, Mary Ann set her technical team to create the database and upload the photos. PhotoAtlas was set up but, according to Mary Ann, some of the photos were loaded with incorrect data. PhotoAtlas' editing capabilities let Mary Ann fix these photos easily. She reorganized the photos and added information, thus creating Hays Public Library's PhotoAtlas web site. “We have a homes tour set up already, and I'm looking into adding some video as well.”



Carnegie Library, Hays, Kansas

## Problem Solved

One issue that arose while setting up PhotoAtlas was the fact that, originally, PhotoAtlas only allowed a finite number of photos per location. “I have hundreds of photographs from our university, which have one address and initially, we couldn’t post these.” The PhotoAtlas Development Team at Northern Micrographics solved this issue, and now PhotoAtlas allows an unlimited number of images per location.

## Visitors Using PhotoAtlas

There have been many visitors to the site, even before heavily promoting it. “In the last two and a half weeks, we’ve had over 100 different visitors and over 500 visits; I think that’s pretty good,” said Mary Ann. And Mary Ann is continuing to learn about the features of PhotoAtlas and how to use those features to the best advantage of the photos in her collection.

## More About PhotoAtlas

PhotoAtlas lets you put your photos online through an easy-to-use set up process that creates a database that is easy to add to and edit. Then, your photos are presented online in a geographic context using applications based on Microsoft®’s Bing™ Maps for Enterprise. You can add descriptions of your images that will help tell the story of your community. You can create tours of specific locations, and you can add video and audio to further explain the images and locations.

According to Tom Ringdahl, VP of Sales and Marketing at Northern Micrographics, “PhotoAtlas meets the needs of libraries and other organizations that want to put photos online easily and affordably. More than that, PhotoAtlas is a powerful way to help tell the story of a community with photos, audio, and video.”

PhotoAtlas has certainly helped Hays Public Library present their photographic collections in a meaningful way. To sum up, in the words of Mary Ann Thompson, Kansas Room Librarian at the Hays Public Library, “I like the program.”

We think you might like PhotoAtlas, too. Visit [www.normicro.com](http://www.normicro.com) to learn more. Visit <http://digitalarchive.hayspublib.org> and see how Mary Ann has created a pathway through her community and its history. And then call us at 800.236.0850 or email us at [sales@nmt.com](mailto:sales@nmt.com) to learn how PhotoAtlas can help put your photos on the map.



Northern Micrographics

*What do you know worth saving?*

