

2000

Preservin' the South

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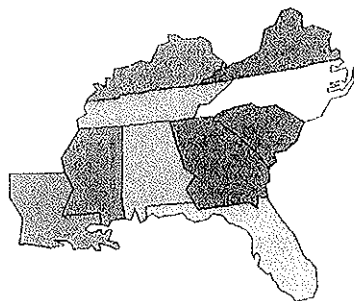
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Preservin' the South

Preservation News by Christine Wiseman
Education Officer,
SOLINET Preservation Field Services



An Online Tool for Identification of Videotape Formats

Video came into wide use as a recording technology during the mid-1950s. Since this time over 50 different formats were developed, many of which end up in library and archival collections. The Electronic Media Group of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) has a website to aid librarians and archivists in identification of videotape formats. The site includes images and descriptions of nearly all video formats as well as an obsolescence rating for each according to the viability

of the format and its playback equipment. The URL is:
<<http://aic.stanford.edu/conspec/emg/>>, click on "Identification of Video".

3rd Edition of NEDCC's "Preservation Manual" Published

The Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) announced the publication of the third edition of "Preservation and of Library and Archival Materials: A Manual" in hardcover. The revised and expanded edition, edited by Shereyn Odgen, has been available on NEDCC's website <www.nedcc.org> for about a year, and is now available in printed form. Cost is \$50 which includes shipping and handling. Send payment or purchase order to: NEDCC, c/o FPMSI, 220 Neck Rd., Haverhill, MA 01835.

Disaster Response Flip Chart

A flip chart listing immediate response procedures is an essential component of any library, archival, or museum disaster plan. Intended to be a quick reference, flip charts can be posted at accessible locations around the building. The Southeast Museums Conference (SEMC) Professional Development Committee has developed a "Disaster Response Flip Chart" as a model for outlining actions to be taken by an institution's staff during the first few minutes after an incident or emergency. Based on a chart developed by the Upper Midwest Conservation Association, the flip chart can be edited to be institution specific. Available in both Microsoft Word and WordPerfect versions, the flipchart kit also includes colored paper for printing. Cost is \$30 for SEMC members, \$25 non-members. For ordering information contact the SEMC Office, PO Box 3494, Baton Rouge, LA, 70821-3494, (225)-383-5042.

2000 Hurricane Predicted to be Active

Hurricane season begins June 1st and runs to November 30. It is time again to update, or develop in some cases, your institution's disaster plan. Most hurricanes are formed in August and September; however, experts predict that this season will see hurricane formation earlier than usual. Now is the time to inventory and replenish disaster supplies, update emergency phone lists, review recovery procedures, trim trees and remove loose debris around the perimeter of your building, and verify contact information for outside disaster recovery services.

Experts predict that the 2000 Atlantic hurricane season is likely to be more active than the long term average (100 years), yet slightly less active than the past four years. Storm predictions include 11 named storms (average is 9.3), 7 hurricanes (average is 5.7) and 3 intense hurricanes (average is 2.2), defined as Saffir-Simpson category 3, 4 or 5 with winds above 110 mph. According to landfall predictions, the entire U.S. coastline has a 60% chance of a major hurricane (category 3-4-5) making landfall. The U.S. east coast, including Florida, has a 39% chance, the Gulf Coast, from the FL panhandle to Brownsville, TX has a 34% chance, and the Caribbean basin a 10% chance. All of these predictions are well above the 100-year average.

The Southeast has experienced significant storm damage in the past two years. Four of 1998's 10 hurricanes impacted the Southeast: Earl, Bonnie, Georges, and Mitch. Georges was ranked by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as the costliest hurricane to date, causing \$2.5 billion in damage. In 1999 there were 8 Atlantic hurricanes; Floyd, which caused severe flooding in North Carolina, was the 4th costliest hurricane.

The safety of an institution's staff and patrons is of paramount importance before, during, and after a disaster. Build ample time into your disaster plan for staff to prepare the building and collections, keeping in mind that they will need time to protect personal property and possessions in the event of an evacuation. Preparedness is core to FEMA's Project Impact, which focuses on building disaster resistant communities through promoting awareness and forming public-private partnerships. The purpose of this project is to create communities that can recover quickly after a disaster, and through preparedness to reduce loss of life and property. Contact FEMA (www.fema.gov) to find out whether your institution is located in a designated Project Impact community or to learn about how your community can participate.

Preparation and preparedness are the keys to survival and protection of library and archival collections in the event of a hurricane. Although damage can not be entirely prevented, it can be mitigated by

preparedness. The potential for damage to library and archival collections is directly related to the construction of the building housing the collections. A structural engineer or architect can advise on building improvements such as roof bracing or installation of hurricane shutters to make a building more resistant to storm damage.

Since hurricanes usually approach with several days warning, an institution can stage its preparedness activities according to the level of warning. For example, when a hurricane watch is announced you have approximately 36 hours notice. At this time begin to brief employees, contact outside contractors and local freezer services, and identify shelters. When the announcement is elevated to a warning (hurricane is possible within 24 hours), the more labor-intensive precautions should be undertaken such as installing shutters, removing loose objects from building grounds, and covering and moving collections.

These measures of protection will be impossible to implement in such a short period of time without advance planning. For more detailed information about what to do before, during, and after a storm see the excerpt from Mike Trinkley's Hurricane! Surviving the Big One on the SOLINET website <www.solinet.net/presvtn/disaster/disastsv.htm>.

In order to facilitate preparations the following websites may be of assistance:
Colorado State University, Department of Atmospheric Science <typhoon.atmos.colostate.edu>
Federal Emergency Management Agency <www.fema.gov>
National Hurricane Center <www.nhc.noaa.gov/>
National Task Force on Emergency Response <www.heritagepreservation.org/PROGRAMS/taskfer.htm>
SOLINET Preservation Services <www.solinet.net/presvtn/disaster/disastsv.htm>
Weather Underground <www.wunderground.com:80/tropical/>

SOLINET Preservation Services receives \$1.4 million in grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)

SOLINET has received \$555,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to support the continuation of its regional Field Services program. The 24-month grant began May 1, 2000. With this new grant, Preservation Services will provide educational programs, information and referral, publications, and consultations for the libraries and archives in the Southeast to improve the ability of institutions to preserve and provide access to their informational resources.

\$869,226 was awarded to SOLINET from NEH to fund a fifth cooperative preservation microfilming project beginning in July 2000. The two-year project will preserve 7,300 deteriorated volumes from 11 libraries documenting the history and culture of the American South.

A Death

Paul N. Banks, pioneer in the field of library and archives conservation, died on May 10, 2000. Paul was a founding member of the American Institute for Conservation, Treasurer 1977-79, President 1979-81, and an Honorary Member.

Paul began his career in the late 1950s as a book designer in New York City. He worked with Carolyn Horton, taught bookbinding in New York, and in 1964 was invited to become Head of Conservation at the Newberry Library in Chicago, one of the first designations of such a position in the United States. At the Newberry he developed a library-wide conservation program and began his technical study of library storage conditions and environmental control. Paul was a member of the team that responded after the Florence flood and this experience helped to shape his ideas about the collections approach to book conservation.

In the early 1970s, Paul began his long effort to establish a training program for library conservators and preservation librarians. In 1981, with the help of the National Endowment for the Humanities, he became the first Director of the Library and Archives Conservation Education Programs at the School of Library Service, Columbia University. This program continues today at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Texas at Austin. This is perhaps his greatest legacy to the future and the achievement of which he was the most proud. The momentum of forces he set in

motion has changed library culture and his hundreds of students, active in the preservation fields, will continue to construct his vision.

Until his death, Paul was active with assignments as consultant to the Library of Congress and Advisor to the National Archives and Records Administration, notably in the specification for storage and display of the Declaration of Independence, the U. S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Paul was appointed the first National Archives Fellow in Preservation in 1998. Paul was a very persuasive teacher, adamant campaigner for the role of preservation in culture and an irresistible companion. At his request, no funeral will be held, but there will be small, local gatherings to honor him. Those who wish to do so may make donations to the Paul N. Banks Endowed Graduate Fellowship at the University of Texas at Austin.
(Reprinted from the Conservation DistList Instance: 13:58, Friday, May 19, 2000)

New Publication on Copying Processes

Before Photocopying: The Art and History of Mechanical Copying 1780-1938 by Barbara Rhodes and William Streeter is an exhaustive history of mechanical copying processes from the industrial revolution to the founding of the Xerox Corporation. Although the focus is on letterpress copying machines and techniques, there is a great deal of information on other types of copying techniques. The book is extensively illustrated and divided into two sections: "Materials and Methods" and "History of the Letter Copying Press." There is a chapter focusing on the preservation of letterpress copying materials which discusses the nature of the paper, bindings, and inks used, as well as storage recommendations. The book may be ordered from Oak Knoll Books, 310 Delaware St, New Castle, DE, 19720, 302-328-7232 for \$75.

New Environmental Tool: Preservation Calculator

The Preservation Calculator is a free software program that rates an institution's environmental storage conditions, determines the rate of the deterioration of organic materials, and predicts the likelihood of a mold outbreak. The Calculator was developed by the Image Permanence Institute (IPI) at Rochester Institute of Technology with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Mellon Foundation. The program runs on Windows 95, 98, NT, or 2000 and can be downloaded for free from www.rit.edu/~661www1/sub_pages/frameset2.html. It will not run on a Macintosh. The calculator measures the effect of storage conditions on the rate of natural aging of collections using the Preservation Index, which was also developed by IPI. The Preservation Index predicts the life expectancy of an item as compared to the lifespan of a "preservation problem object," such as acidic paper, stored at room temperature. The calculator does not consider other environmental factors such as light levels or air quality. Using the mouse or arrow keys move the sliders on the temperature and relative humidity scales to the desired level. Then the calculator predicts the Preservation Index (in years), days to mold germination, and evaluates the natural aging rate. The help function explains the rationale behind the tool and includes instructions for use and a list of related resources. The calculator is meant to be a planning and analysis tool that supplements existing environmental monitoring.

