

A Preservation Primer and Resource Guide for North Carolina Librarians

There are two parts to this article. The first section contains a brief discussion of those elements staff members must address for the preservation of their library materials. The second section contains lists of publications, services, and sources for more specific information.

PART ONE

A Preservation Primer: Six Parts of a Complete Program

1. Environment.

The environment is the single most crucial factor to assure the long-term survival of the collection. Although there are ideal conditions for each type of format (book, videotape, photograph, etc.), a good compromise can be reached for all. Aim for a *stable* environment of approximately 70 degrees and 50 percent relative humidity.

Stability is the key. Since fibers in paper swell and contract as temperature and humidity levels fluctuate, repeated cycling leads to breakdown of paper and failure of glues. Although a constant environment is very difficult to achieve, do your best. An environment of 75 degrees is better than one that bounces between 70 and 80.

There are other environmental issues to consider. Light bleaches and weakens paper and cloth bindings, so books should be kept away from constant sun and fluorescent light. Shades, timers on lights, and special shields to filter out the most harmful rays are easy ways to reduce light damage. Also, stack and office areas must be kept clean. Dust and unfiltered pollutants in the air abrade books, and insects will eat library materials. Trash should be removed daily, and air should be kept circulating to keep mold and mildew from forming.

2. Storage and Handling Procedures.

The materials used to store library materials must be of proper quality. Metal shelves with a baked enamel finish are better for books than wooden shelves that may be acidic and may be emitting harmful fumes. Thin metal bookends or those with sharp edges often "knife" books and damage pages. Thick, rounded, plastic bookends are better. There are appropriate storage envelopes, folders, and boxes for photographs, manuscripts, reels of film, and maps to help insulate them from further damage.

Staff must pay attention to handling procedures. Shelving books too tightly or too loosely creates problems, as do spills from library carts. (It is best to load the bottom of the cart first, distributing the weight on each side equally before going up to the next shelf; a low center of gravity will keep the cart from tipping.) Shelving materials the proper way will save rebinding and/or replacement costs. Encouraging patrons to return books to the desk instead of the book drop will reduce extensive damage as well.

3. Copying Materials.

Care must be taken at the copying machine. Since all materials are not strong enough to endure the process, fragile materials should be controlled. Books, especially tightly bound ones, should not be pressed with great weight against the copying surface; doing one page at a time, while supporting the other at an angle, is best; photocopiers are available that allow for this. (See the Resource Guide.) Copying materials and then allowing patrons to use the photocopy cuts down on wear and tear.

If a library is considering microfilming some of its materials, it should make sure that the information has not already been copied by someone else. It must also make sure that the chosen microfilmer adheres to rigid preservation standards to produce a film that will last for generations rather than just a few years. Proper storage of the master negative and the copy is crucial as well.

4. Exhibiting

In exhibiting materials, make sure they are kept in museum-quality cases where heat and light levels are not excessive. Originals should not be forced to stay open; nor should they be exhibited for long periods of time. Items on the walls can be damaged by acidic framing materials, become faded by constant exposure to light and are subject to moisture condensing inside the glass in an area marked by heat and humidity fluctuations.

5. Treatment (Or Conservation)

In repairing books, the use of inappropriate techniques or supplies (such as dime-store glue or any pressure-sensitive tape) can result in more harm than good. Therefore, staff should get instruction before attempting any type of repair to books with a long shelf life. Valuable, old, and/or brittle materials should be repaired only by qualified specialists. If the library decides to use a professional, that conservator's references should be checked and treatment options should be discussed.

In using a library binder, staff should determine that the binder is doing what is best for the book, not what is easiest for the binder. There are national binding standards; find out if the binder adheres to them or not.

6. Disaster Preparedness and Response

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure: library staffs must be aware of the disasters to which they may be prone, no matter their source. Knowing where keys are; how to turn off the electricity, gas, and water to the building; what the most important materials are; and how to salvage wet and damaged materials are key bits of knowledge. By surveying the building for possible dangers, and working in teams to codify procedures, staff can eventually develop, distribute, and keep current a disaster plan to follow in times of emergency.

PART TWO

A Resource Guide For Library Preservation

The following lists contain some of the many available preservation publications, institutions, services, and vendors. All of the listed titles are recommended. However, while all the vendors and service providers are considered reputable, inclusion here should not be interpreted as an endorsement.

1. General Preservation Guides:

BOOKS, ARTICLES, AND PAMPHLETS.

DePew, John. *A Library, Media, and Archival Preservation Handbook*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1991. 441 pp. \$49.50. [Chapters on almost all preservation issues with many useful appendices.]

Fox, Lisa L. *A Core Collection in Preservation*. 2nd ed. Edited by Don K. Thompson and Joan ten Hoor. Atlanta: Southeastern Library Network, Inc., 1993. 41 pp. \$5.00. [Excellent bibliography with descriptions, prices, and ordering information.]

Ogden, Shereyn, ed. *Preservation of Library & Archival Materials: A Manual*. Andover, MA: Northeast Document Conservation Center, 1992. Pages unnumbered. \$23.50. [Leaflets on various topics in a loose-leaf notebook.]

Ritzenthaler, Mary Lynn. *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts*. SAA Archival Fundamental Series. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1993. 225 pp. \$25.00. [A guide to preservation in an archival setting.]

Stitts, Maxine K. *A Practical Guide to Preservation in School and Public Libraries*. ERIC Clearing House of Information Resources. ED340391. NY: Syracuse University, 1990. 55 pp. \$6.50. [Uncomplicated distillation of many preservation issues, with useful resource lists. Order from: Syracuse University, 030 Huntington Hall, Syracuse, NY 13244-2340.]

York, Maurice C., et al., "Establishing and Maintaining a Local History Collection and Local History/Genealogical Resources." *North Carolina Libraries* 46 (Summer 1988): 68, 70-84, 104-107. [Brief and comprehensive guide focusing on collection development and management, including preservation.]

NEWSLETTERS:

The Abbey Newsletter. Published eight times a year. (7105 Geneva Drive, Austin, TX 78723 [512/929-3992]). \$49.00 a year for institutions; \$40 for individuals; \$20 for full-time students.

CAN. Conservation Administration News. Published quarterly. Graduate School of Library and Information Science, The University of Texas at Austin. Austin, TX 78712-1276. \$24.00.

2. Organizations.

IN NORTH CAROLINA:

North Carolina Library Association. Special Collections Roundtable. Occasional conferences and programs with preservation content. 109 E. Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27601-1023 (919/839-6252).

North Carolina Preservation Consortium. NCPC is a nonprofit organization. Membership is open to all institutions and individuals. An independent affiliate of the School of Library and Information Sciences at North Carolina Central University, it provides preservation education and information. Workshops on disaster preparedness and response, care and handling of library materials, simple book repair, and other subjects are available. Can answer some questions and give referrals. 804 Old Fayetteville St., Durham, NC 27701 (919/683-1709).

Society of North Carolina Archivists. SNCA is an organization of individuals and institutions concerned with the preservation and use of archival and manuscript materials. SNCA produces a quarterly newsletter and stages two full-day meetings a year at various locations. Annual membership is \$15.00. Society of NC Archivists, P.O. Box 20448, Raleigh, NC 27619.

OUTSIDE NORTH CAROLINA:

- American Association for State & Local History. 172 Second Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37201-1902 (615/255-2971). AASL&H offers programs and publications on numerous preservation-related issues.
- American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. 1717 K St. NW, Suite 301, Washington, DC 20006 (202/452-9545). AIC provides preservation information, publications, and referral to conservators.
- American Library Association. The Preservation of Library Materials Section. (Association for Library Collections & Technical Services Division.) 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611 (800/545-2433; ext. 4298). ALA is the major professional group for individuals and organizations interested in preservation. A national forum for information on preservation issues; frequent educational sessions and workshops.
- Association of Moving Image Archivists. c/o National Center for Film & Video Preservation. P.O. Box 27999, Los Angeles, CA 90027 (213/856-7637). AMIA is a membership organization of institutions interested in film and television preservation. The National Center for Film and Video Preservation serves as its secretariat and produces AMIA's quarterly newsletter. It also administers the National Endowment for the Arts Film Preservation Program.
- Association for Recorded Sound Collections. P.O. Box 10162, Silver Spring, MD 20914-0057 (301/593-6552). ARSC encourages the preservation of historical recordings and promotes information and research exchange. It has published related reports and produces a biannual journal.
- Gaylord Preservation Information "Help Line" (800/428-3631) Toll-free service provided by the Gaylord Library Supply Company. Call 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. EST, THURSDAYS & FRIDAYS ONLY to speak to independent Conservator Nancy Carlson Shrock. Note: Gaylord also distributes free copies of its Preservation Pathfinder Series of Publications. Gaylord Bros. Box 4901, Syracuse, NY 13221-4901 (800/634-6307).
- Image Permanence Institute. Rochester Institute of Technology, 70 Lomb Memorial Drive, Rochester NY 14623-5604 (716/475-5199). IPI is an excellent resource for publications and information on care of photographs.
- Library Binding Institute. 7401 Metro Blvd., Suite 325, Edina, MN 55439 (612/835-4707). LBI is a source for information and publications on library binding/preservation issues.
- Northeast Document Conservation Center. 100 Brickstone Square, Andover, MA 01810-1494 (508/470-1010). NEDCC is a regional center offering publications, conservation work, microfilming, educational programs, consultations, and disaster assistance.
- Palmetto Archives, Libraries & Museums: Council on Preservation. PALMCOP is a South Carolina statewide membership organization that offers preservation workshops and a newsletter. Contact Lea Walsh, SC State Library, P.O. Box 11469, Columbia, SC 29211.
- The Society of American Archivists, 600 S. Federal, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60605 (312/922-0140). National professional association for archivists and institutions interested in the preservation and use of archives, manuscripts, and current records. SAA publishes a scholarly quarterly and a newsletter and is a source for preservation titles and workshops.
- Southeastern Library Network, 1438 Peachtree St., Atlanta, GA 30309-2955 (404/892-0943 or 800/999-8558). The Preservation Office of SOLINET offers hand-outs and publications (free and for a fee), educational programs, video rental, consultations, and a telephone service for general information, referrals, and advice in emergency situations.

3. Preservation Supplies:

- Bookmakers. 6001 66th Ave. Suite 101, Riverdale, MD 20737 (301/459-3384; Fax 459-7629). Mostly book repair & binding.
- Conservation Resources International, Inc. 8000-H Forbes Place. Springfield, VA 22151 (800/634-6932; Fax 703/321-0629). Mostly archival supplies.
- Gaylord Brothers. Box 4901, Syracuse, NY 13221-4901 (Orders: 800/448-6160; Fax 272-3412. Customer Service: 800/634-6307). A variety of preservation materials.
- Hollinger Corporation. P.O. Box 6185. Arlington, VA 22206 (703/671-6600 or 800/634-0491). Mostly archival supplies.
- Light Impressions. 439 Monroe Ave, P.O. Box 940, Roshester, NY 14603-0940 (Customer Service: 800/828-9859). A variety of preservation supplies; much on photographs.
- TALAS. Technical Library Service. For a current catalog and price list, send \$5.00 to TALAS, 213 West 35th Street, New York City, NY 1001-1996 (212/736-7744). Wide array of materials.
- University Products. P.O. Box 101, Holyoke, MA 01041-0101. (Customer Service: 800/762-1165). A variety of preservation supplies; much on photographs.

4. Photocopying & Microfilming

Preservation Photocopiers: "Book-friendly" photocopiers do exist. They feature a sloped surface adjacent to the copying surface so that the book does not have to be pressed flat against the copying surface. Some sources are:

- Oce-Business Systems, Inc. P.O. Box 30, Stamford, CT 06904-0030 (203/323-2111).
- Universal Copy Services, Inc. 2413 Bond Street, University Park, IL 60466 (708/534-1500).
- Xerox Corporation (5042, BookSaver Copier) 100 South Clinton Avenue, Xerox Square, Rochester, NY 14644.

PRESERVATION PHOTOCOPYING & MICROFILMING SERVICES:

- Image Prints, Inc. 2730 Alpha St., Lansing, MI 48910 (800/782-4502). Photocopying and microfilming.
 MAPS, The Micrographic Preservation Service. 9 S. Commerce Way, Bethlehem, PA 18017 (215/758-8700).
 Preservation microfilming.
 Northeast Document Conservation Center. 100 Brickstone Sq., Andover, MA 01810-1428 (508/470-1010).
 Photocopying and microfilming.
 Northern Archival Copy. 4730 Lorinda Dr., Shoreview, MN 55126 (612/483-9346). Preservation photocopying.

5. Conservators & Conservation**PUBLICATION:**

- Paris, Jan. *Choosing and Working with a Conservator*. Atlanta: SOLINET Preservation Program, Southeastern Library Network, Inc., 1990, 24 pp. \$10.00.

REFERRALS:

- American Insitute for Conservation (AIC) offers referrals to conservators, as do many of the other organizations listed above.

CONSERVATION LABS:

- BookLab, Inc. 1606 Headway Circle, Suite 100, Austin, Texas 78754 (512/837-0479).
 Conservation Center for Art and Historical Artifacts on Paper. 264 S. 23rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 (215/545-0613).
 Information Conservation, Inc. (ICI). Conservation Division. 6204 Corporate Park Dr., Brown Summit, NC 27214 (800/444-7534).
 The North Carolina Division of Archives and History. NCDA&H's conservation lab accepts public orders on a fee basis, as time permits. Contact Technical Services, NC Division of Archives & History, 109 E. Jones Street, Raleigh, NC 27601-2807 (919/733-7691).
 Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC), 100 Brickstone Square, Andover, MA 01810 (508/470-1010).

6. Library Binding

- Library Binding Institute. *Library Binding Institute Standard for Library Binding*. 8th ed. Paul A. Parisi and Jan Merrill-Oldham, eds. Rochester, NY: Library Binding Institute, 1986. 17 pp. \$5.00. A new edition is being prepared.
 Merrill-Oldham, Jan, and Paul Parisi. *Guide to the Library Binding Institute Standard for Library Binding*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1990. 62 pp. \$23.00.
The New Library Scene. Library Binding Institute. 401 Metro Blvd., Suite 325, Edina, MN 55439. \$18.00.
 Bimonthly journal on library binding trends and preservation.

7. Disaster Planning & Response**INFORMATION RESOURCES:**

- Barton, John P., and Johanna G. Wellheiser, eds. *An Ounce of Prevention: A Handbook on Contingency Planning for Archives, Libraries and Records Centres*. Toronto: Toronto Area Archivists Group Education Foundation, 1985. 192 pp. \$17.95. (One of the best and most-quoted guides around.) Order from Toronto Area Archivists Group, P.O. Box 97, Station F., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4Y 2L4.
 Fortson, Judith. *Disaster Planning And Recovery: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians and Archivists*. How-To-Do-It Manuals for Libraries, no. 21. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 1992. 181 pp. \$39.95.
 Practical handbook with a sample plan and helpful appendices and addresses.
 Young, Richard L., and David J. Tinsley. *Library and Archival Disaster: Preparedness and Recovery*. Oakton, VA: Bibliotech, 1986. \$125.00. A 21-minute video on disasters and salvage procedures. Includes a 16-page workbook to begin a disaster recovery plan. Order from ALA Video/Library Video Network, 320 York Rd., Towson, MD 21204-5179 (800/441-TAPE).

VENDORS: *Vendors offer services to facilitate recovery from disasters. Most supply equipment to dry and clean the site, and freeze and ultimately dry books damaged by water.*

- BMS CAT. Blackmon-Mooring-Steamatic Catastrophe, Inc., 303 Arthur St., Fort Worth, TX 76107
 Southeast Office (404/454-9228); 24-hour emergency number (800/433-2940).
 Document Reprocessors. East Coast Location: 5611 Water St., Middlesex, NY 14507 (715/554-4500);
 24-hour emergency number (800/4-DRYING).
 MF Bank/The Restoration Company. 4708 South Old Peachtree, Norcross, GA 30071-1514 (404/242-6637);
 24-hour emergency number (800/843-7284).
 Munters Moisture Control Services. 79 Monroe St., Amesbury, MA 01913-4740 (508/388-4900); Southeast
 Center (404/242-0935). 24-hour emergency number (800/I-CAN-DRY).
 Re-Oda Chem Engineering Company, 210 Bell Street, P.O. Box 424, Chagrin Falls, OH 44022 (216/247-4131);
 [For removal of smoke and smoke residue only.]

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