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# Establishing and Maintaining a Local History Collection

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*"Neglecting the history of your native grounds is perilous. If you don't have a precise and accurate understanding of your immediate environment ... your opinions on how we should govern ourselves on a national or world level are suspect."*

Byron Dobell, editor  
*American Heritage*

The study of local history helps citizens—public officials, students, historians, genealogists, and preservationists—acquire a sense of place and understand how a community's past meshes with broader historical trends. The knowledge gained enables them to participate as informed members of society and to evaluate current challenges in the context of the community's long-term development.

These patrons can use the local history collection in a variety of ways. Public officials need resources that will clarify earlier governmental decisions and policies. Teachers seeking to illustrate and complement textbook lessons will find that local history materials excite students and enliven classroom discussions. Historians hoping to understand the everyday life of a community will require an extensive local history collection if their work is to be effective. Genealogists can use the local history collection to determine a family's history and role in a community. Preservationists will depend on a collection's maps, documentary photographs, and publications to verify the earlier existence and appearance of historic structures.

Furthermore, local history collections can reflect and encourage community pride. Citizens can turn to such collections for evidence of past accomplishments by community groups and outstanding citizens. Materials documenting the successes of the local high school sports program, for example, can augment feelings of community unity. Civic groups and leading citizens will rely on collections for information about their pasts.

Public libraries play an important role in pre-

serving local history materials. They are the institutions best suited to making knowledge of the community available to the general public. Most people depend on the public library for their information needs and are more willing to use and support a local history collection than broader collections in distant institutions. Moreover, statewide repositories cannot preserve a complete record—books, pamphlets, newspapers, government publications, photographs, maps, audio-visual materials, and ephemera—of the history of every town, city, and county in North Carolina. As the quantity of publications and historical materials in diverse media continues to grow, the local library must accept the responsibility for preserving and making available to the public sufficient resources to document a community's past. The library that leaves to chance the preservation of its community's historical resources by other institutions risks discovering in the future that such materials no longer exist.

Yet no library can act alone in acquiring and caring for all materials relating to a locality's history. Financial and staffing differences, variation in needs and desires of patrons, and different service priorities all influence the nature of local history collections and insure that no two are exactly alike. Some collections will wisely admit that caring for certain materials and operating certain programs are beyond their capabilities, and they will direct donations to institutions better able to collect and preserve specific items. Online bibliographic data bases, interlibrary loan services, and published guides to institutional holdings facilitate the exchange of information. A basic awareness of other institutions' holdings relating to the library's community is nearly always better than a willingness to accept all materials offered with good intentions—but no reasonable prospect—of "one day" processing and preservation of them. After consideration of patron needs, financial limitations, alternative sources of information, and its own relationship to other institutions, a library should be able to determine the type of local history collection it can maintain.

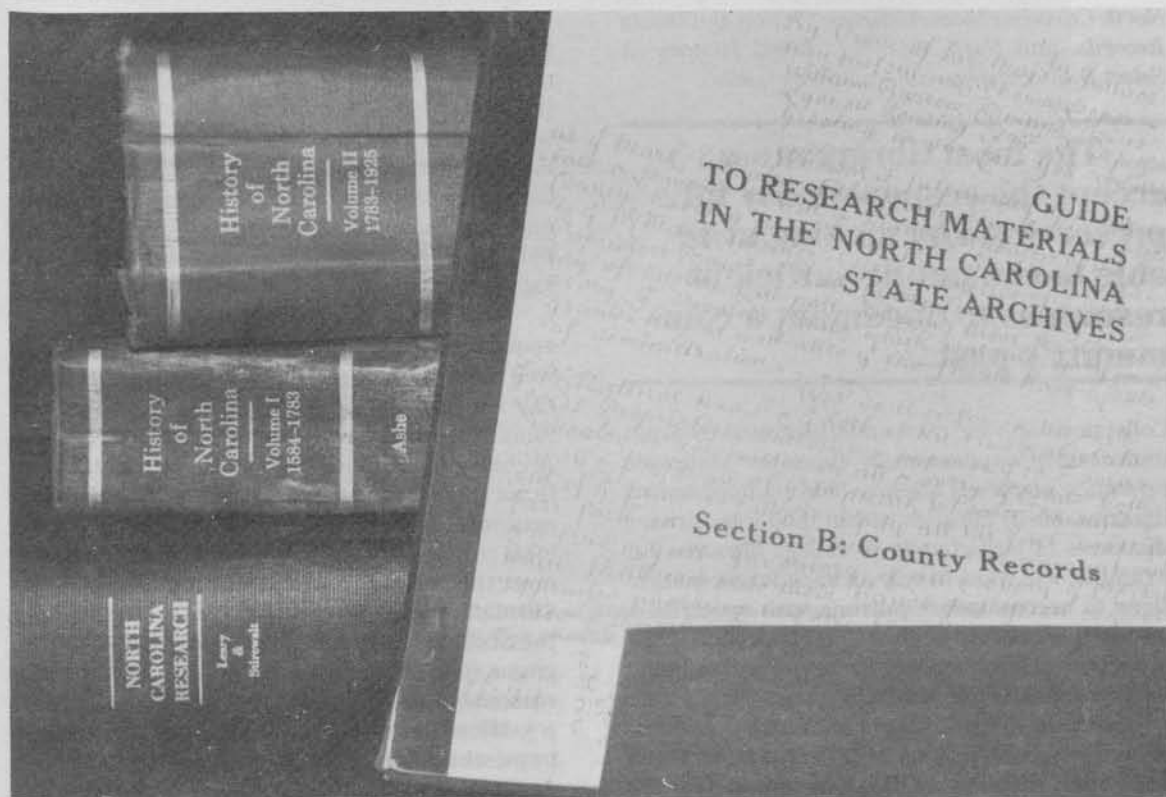
## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Planning is central to the organization and operation of an effective local history collection. While many libraries have such collections, too few have written development policies. The lack of such documents nearly always results in unclear goals and inconsistent acquisitions. A written policy forces the librarian to determine and state the basic collection objectives. A well-conceived, written policy frequently proves useful in explaining acquisitions to patrons, library governing bodies, and supervisors.

The collection development policy should begin with a statement of objectives outlining the library's purpose in establishing and maintaining a local history collection. In deciding these objectives, careful consideration should be given to the type of population to be served and the availability of local history resources elsewhere in the community. One of the most important decisions to be made by the policy drafters is defining the geographic area to be emphasized in the collection. Whether city, county, or larger regional area, the primary focus of the collection should be

clearly explained in the policy. The needs of the probable users will largely determine this focus. A county library, for example, will likely want to emphasize that county's history in a collection appropriate for patrons of varied ages and interests. A wide range of patrons, libraries, and community institutions can be expected to turn to the collection as the most comprehensive source of information on the county. Regional libraries or those in large urban centers may need to collect materials on several counties or a larger geographic area.

The collection development policy should state the subject focus of the collection and the formats to be collected or accepted—always in light of the objectives of the collection, who its users are, what materials are available in nearby libraries or through cooperative borrowing services, and the ability of the library to care for certain types of materials. A good policy will state guidelines that assure consistent, manageable acquisitions, but will always leave some flexibility for special situations that will invariably occur. Such a policy will provide for removal of unneeded or duplicate items and will outline the steps to be followed in



Although the local history librarian should avoid the temptation to develop a collection of broad scope, basic North Carolina historical and genealogical reference works will prove essential to researchers. *Photograph by R. E. Klett, Wadesboro.*

giving materials to other libraries or selling them. The policy should be specific in discussing how gift materials are treated, whether they get priority processing over purchased materials, who acknowledges their receipt, and how a permanent record of their receipt is maintained.

When accepting gifts, as well as in purchasing materials, the librarian should always remember the goal of building a useful collection of materials about the local town, county, or region. Larger libraries with statewide emphases are unable to collect extensive material about each locality, and the local history collection must fill this need.<sup>2</sup>

All local history collections will want to have available for their patrons basic material on North Carolina, such as William S. Powell's *North Carolina Gazetteer*, Hugh T. Lefler and Albert R. Newsome's *North Carolina: The History of a Southern State*, and the current issue of the *North Carolina Manual*. They will also want to acquire appropriate sources to answer questions from fourth and eighth grade social studies students who are required to study North Carolina history. Basic statewide genealogical reference books, such as *North Carolina Research: Genealogy and Local History*, *Guide to Research Materials in the North Carolina State Archives: Section B, County Records*, and *North Carolina Local History: A Select Bibliography*, will also prove useful.

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Collections should take care, however, to avoid unnecessary duplication of expensive statewide reference materials already held by neighboring libraries. Small libraries within moderate driving distances of large public or college libraries, for example, will want to rely on such larger institutions to accommodate patrons with specialized, in-depth research needs. This approach frees libraries to concentrate their resources on building better local collections.

Sometimes a patron will argue that a particular book is vital to his or her research and that travel to a neighboring library is impossible. The local history librarian may be pressured to acquire the item even though its relevance to local history is marginal and its potential use by other

patrons doubtful. Such pressure should be resisted. A well-written collection development policy can be useful in resisting such pressure, since it shows why a particular purchase is unsuitable. Frequently, the librarian may defuse these situations by relying on the growing number of interlibrary loan and document transmission services available in North Carolina. Other libraries may be willing to loan the item needed or to provide photocopies of the desired references.

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Such cooperative services are particularly valuable in meeting the needs of genealogical researchers. Although local history collections nearly always contain a great deal of information of interest to genealogists—indeed, genealogists typically are among the most frequent and supportive users of the local history collection—no single collection can possibly meet all their needs.

As mentioned earlier, collections will want to acquire certain basic statewide reference materials, but developing broad genealogical collections should be left to large, well-staffed and well-funded libraries. The Genealogical Services Branch of the North Carolina State Library in Raleigh, with its extensive genealogical holdings and well-trained staff, should be relied on as the library for more comprehensive statewide genealogical research and reference.

The local history collection may want to acquire microfilm copies of federal censuses, as well as local legal records such as wills, deeds, and court records, for its service area. Census microfilms can be purchased from the National Archives, but building extensive collections of these materials can be expensive. The librarian may want to purchase census microfilms for the local county only and rely on interlibrary loans to meet the needs of patrons for other areas. North Carolina census records may be borrowed from the State Library, and several private rental programs supply film for a large number of states at a reasonable cost.<sup>3</sup>

Microfilm of many county legal records can be purchased from the North Carolina Division of Archives and History; and the Core Collection microfilm series (primarily pre-1868 selected county records) is also available on interlibrary loan from the State Library. By relying on these

SCHEDULE 2.—Slave Inhabitants in *the Western Division* in the County of *Wake* State *of North*  
of *Carolina*, enumerated by me, on the *14* day of *July*, 1860. *A. D. Easton* Ass't Marshal

[illegible]

In 1850 and 1860, census takers recorded facts about slaves belonging to each slaveholder. *Photograph of a page from a manuscript copy of the 1860 slave schedule of Wake County from the State Archives, Raleigh.*

and other cooperative services, the librarian can concentrate efforts and resources on building a strong local collection, while also assisting patrons wanting access to non-local materials. This practice of using cooperative services to supplement the collection's holdings should be included in the written development policy,

where it will prove helpful in explaining why certain purchases cannot be justified.

In building a local collection, the librarian must determine what materials should be preserved and then decide if the library has the resources to allow their preservation. If not, these materials should be referred to other libraries



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SCHEDULE 1.—Free Inhabitants in *The City of Raleigh* in the County of *Wake* State  
of *NC* enumerated by me, on the *1st* day of *June* 1880. *John S. Johnston* Asst. Marshal  
Post Office *Raleigh*.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Value of Real Estate		10	11	12	13	14
							Value of Real Estate	Value of Personal Property					
1		Margaret Taylor	38 F										
2	608 608	Eliza Taylor	40 F			Seamstress		50	NC				
3		Caroline	22 F										
4		Ally	9 F										
5		Eliza	6 F										
6	609 605	Constance Taylor	34 F			Seamstress	500	100	NC				
7		Corneelia Chandler	30 F										
8	610 606	Delany Thompson	37 F			Laborer	200	50	NC				
9		Martha	25 F										
10		Anna W	24 F										
11		Salina	22 M			Black Man							
12	611 607	Joseph Thompson	19 M										
13		Pratt	14 M										
14		Asa	18 F										
15		George	1 M										
16		Francis	10 F										
17	612 608	R. B. Justice	48 M			Carpenter	200	125	NC				
18		Martha	43 F										
19		Benjamin	19 M										
20		Richard	15 M										
21		Clara	15 F										
22	609	R. B. Justice	19 M			Laborer			NC				
23		Frank	8 M										
24		James	7 F										
25	615 610	Samuel Turner	56 F			Seamstress	150	25	NC				
26		Rufus	6 M										
27	616 611	James D. Turner	25 M			Laborer							
28		Rizziah	40 F										
29	617 612	Charles Duggs	40 M			Shoemaker		40	NC				
30		William	35 F										
31		John	15 M										
32		Belle	11 F										
33		Mary	9 F										
34		Charles	7 M										
35		Briton	5 M										
36		Moses	1 M										
37	618 613	Berry Canawley	52 F			Black		40	NC				
38		Elizabeth	16 F										
39	617 614	Thos. Johnson	47 M			Tinner	400	75	NC				
40		Rebecca	35 F										

Census records provide valuable information about individuals, families, and communities. Photograph of a page from manuscript copy of the 1860 population schedule of Wake County from the State Archives, Raleigh.

and repositories. Microforms, photographs, and manuscripts all have special maintenance and preservation requirements, and the local history librarian should carefully consider potential costs of housing such materials before acquiring them. A small library unable to care properly for a photograph collection, for example, can refer poten-

tial donors to institutions that maintain such collections. The North Carolina Division of Archives and History, several college and university libraries, and some public libraries have photograph collections. Inquiries can be made to these institutions to see if they might be interested in the offered materials. Sometimes the local history

collection may want to keep positive print copies of photographs for reference purposes, while arranging for the negatives to be held by another institution with reproduction capabilities. Such a policy, and policies on other special format materials, should be described in detail in the collection development plan.

Books and pamphlets relating to a locality comprise one of the most basic areas of collecting responsibility. Most collections choose to be comprehensive rather than selective in acquiring local items; quality or merit of such items is usually secondary in importance to subject matter. Many libraries collect publications by local authors regardless of subject. Writers are often willing to donate copies of their works to the local library and are flattered to be asked for them, especially when told that they will be preserved permanently in the local history collection. Small press publications, limited commemorative editions, privately published items, and journal and magazine articles are often overlooked but can prove valuable additions to the collection. Such items are often produced in small quantities and soon become unavailable; the librarian must act quickly to acquire them. Supplementary materials, such as book reviews, dust jackets, and newspaper articles about local authors strengthen the collection's literary holdings.

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### **The collection will be more wisely selected, better organized, and more valuable to users if its development is focused and controlled rather than haphazard.**

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Newspapers, both in their acquisition and in their preservation, are frequently an area of neglect in many local history collections. Though major dailies are often available commercially on microfilm, there is no coordinated effort to assure the preservation of most of today's local newspapers. Such duties often fall to the library. The North Carolina Division of Archives and History in Raleigh has an excellent program for identifying, microfilming, and selling at modest cost state newspapers published from the eighteenth century into the early decades of the twentieth. This program, however, includes little after 1950 and excludes those papers for which microfilm is available commercially or from other institutions. Libraries must assume the responsibility for preservation of local newspapers not available

through commercial or Archives filming. Sometimes newspapers themselves will join libraries in cooperative preservation programs, such as providing financial support for microfilming. At other times, however, the library is challenged to preserve these important local history sources on its own.

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### **One of the most important decisions to be made . . . is defining the geographic area to be emphasized in the collection.**

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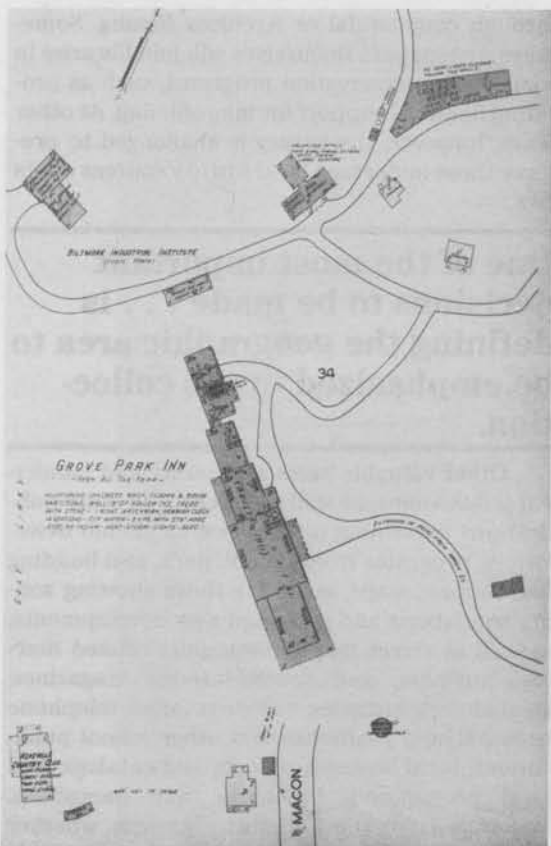
Other valuable items are county and municipal publications, as well as federal and state publications pertaining to the area; local club newsletters; programs from school, park, and building dedications; maps, including those showing zoning regulations and proposed new developments, as well as street maps; community-related literary, business, and special-interest magazines; local church histories; city directories; telephone books; school yearbooks and other school publications; local business reports and catalogs; and local promotional brochures and pamphlets. Materials concerning minority groups, whether racial or religious, can be particularly valuable and can include publications from the area branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to tracts from a local television evangelist or religious cult. Research materials on controversial groups, such as the Ku Klux Klan, should also be collected, although use of these resources may need to be supervised closely to prevent mutilation or theft. When building a local history collection, one should be aware of the research needs of current patrons while at the same time collecting materials on the community that will be of interest to researchers in the future. Such materials may appear to be useless ephemera to most people and will probably not be preserved unless the local history collection does so.

Maps should be collected comprehensively. In addition to acquiring original maps, the library may want to obtain photocopies of rare or valuable maps of the area held by other repositories.

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Sanborn Map Company maps provide accurate, detailed information pertaining to buildings, roads, railroads, and other features of towns and cities. Published at regular intervals during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they can be used to trace a community's evolution. *Photograph of 1917 Sanborn map of Asheville (p. 18) from the North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina Library at Chapel Hill.*

An especially interesting series of maps for many cities and towns was that produced by the Sanborn Map Company. From the 1860s until the 1950s, this New York firm printed large colored maps that show block by block diagrams of buildings, bridges, cemeteries, railroads, and other features. The maps, used for setting insurance rates, were revised approximately every decade and thus can be examined for evidence of change in communities during this ninety-year period. They can be used to estimate the approximate date of a building's construction, determine earlier uses of a building, locate sites of former structures, and chart population changes. Some libraries already have original Sanborn maps in their collections, and maps for individual cities are also available commercially on microfilm. Although not all North Carolina cities were mapped by Sanborn, a surprising number were. Local history collections

will want to acquire these maps for their communities.<sup>4</sup>

Some local history collections establish photographic collections. With sufficient publicity and encouragement to potential donors, the library can usually obtain a sizable number of photographs rather quickly. Families may offer their photograph albums and, although most photographs from these sources are of individuals, some will show structures, public events, school activities, church gatherings or other social happenings, all of which can be useful in documenting the history of a community. Other images which the library may want to collect include postcards, daguerrotypes, ambrotypes, and tintypes.

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### **A well-organized and adequately cared for map collection nearly always proves to be one of the most popular components of a library's local history section.**

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Newspaper clippings and ephemeral items, such as handbills, programs, announcements, advertisements, special menus, posters, and broadsides, that relate to a community's history may be acquired. Ephemeral items are often available free at meetings, street fairs, and festivals, or from chambers of commerce, schools, churches, and other institutions. They are usually difficult to acquire after an event, and the librarian must be prepared to seek them at the event or immediately thereafter.

Films and sound recordings can also be valuable additions to a local history collection. Such materials are especially challenging to preserve and require special handling, processing, and equipment, but libraries with sufficient resources may want to acquire them. The narrated film of local historic sites produced by the county historical society or a tape of the speeches given at a town's bicentennial celebration would naturally

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## CAMDEN COUNTY.

AREA, 280 SQUARE MILES.

POPULATION, 5,667; White 3,347, Colored 2,320.

CAMDEN COUNTY was formed in 1777, from Pasquotank county, and derives its name from the Earl of Camden.

CAMDEN COURT HOUSE, the county-seat, is on the Pasquotank river, and is 220 miles northeast of Raleigh; population 350.

*Surface*—This county is situated along the east bank of the Pasquotank river, and extends from the Virginia line to the Albemarle Sound. The land is level, sandy loam, easily cultivated when drained, and very productive.

*Staples*—Corn, cotton, naval stores, fish and wild fowl. Sweet potatoes yield largely. Grapes are grown successfully, especially Scuppernong.

Truck farming is now extensive.

*Fruits*—Peaches, pears, apples, berries, grape, melons, etc.

*Timbers*—Pine, cypress, juniper, gum, etc.

## TOWNS AND POST OFFICES.

	POP.		PO.
Belcross,	50	Old Trap,	50
Borum,	25	Riddle,	25
Camden C H.	350	Shiloh,	110
Indiantown,	40	South Mills,	500
Lilly,	25		

## COUNTY OFFICERS.

*Clerk Superior Court*—R L Forbes.  
*Commissioners*—G H Riggs, ch'mn;  
 Geo Beverly, W B Hughes, E G Sawyer, C S Wright.  
*Register of Deeds*—W R Dozier.  
*Sheriff*—W S Bartlett.  
*Solicitor 1st District*—W J Leary, Sr.  
*Surveyor*—John K Abbott.  
*Treasurer*—George Jacobs.  
*County Examiner*—H Spencer.  
*Standard Keeper*—C S Sawyer.

## COURTS,

First Monday after first Monday in March and first Monday after first Monday in September.

## TOWNSHIPS AND MAGISTRATES.

Court House—E M Mercer, E S Mercer, T B Godfrey, J L F Sawyer, O L Pritchard, Willis Ferebee, H W Scott, P G Bray, T B Boushall, T G Bray (Camden).  
 Shiloh—G M Tillett, G C Barco, Jas

E Burgess, J B Burgess, D G Bray, Felix Jones, W G Godfrey, S H Sawyer, S B Williams (Shiloh).

South Mills—William E McCoy, D T Pritchard, J A Spencer, J W Whitehurst, Marshall Daily, Wilson Sawyer, H C Brite, S R Edney, W R Dozier (South Mills).

## CHURCHES.

Names, Post Offices, Pastors and Denom.

## METHODIST.

McBride's—South Mills, S Pool.  
 Mill Dam—, N H Guyton.  
 Old Trap—, N H Guyton.  
 Parkville—Indian Town, N H Guyton.  
 Sharon—South Mills, S Pool.  
 Trinity—South Mills, S Pool.

## BAPTIST.

Ebenezer—, R R Overby.  
 Sawyer's Creek—, R R Overby.  
 Shiloh—Elizabeth City, O C Horton.

## MINISTERS RESIDENT.

Names, Post Offices and Denominations.

## METHODIST.

Guyton, N H, South Mills.  
 Pool, S, South Mills.

## BAPTIST.

Overby, R R, South Mills.

## EPISCOPAL.

Williams—, South Mills.  
 McBride, O S (col.), South Mills.

## HOTELS AND BOARDING HOUSES.

Names, Post Offices and Proprietors.

Hotel, Camden, M B Hughes.  
 Hotel, South Mills, Robert Bullock.

## LAWYERS.

Names and Post Offices.

Ferebee, C M, Camden.  
 Spencer, C H, South Mills.

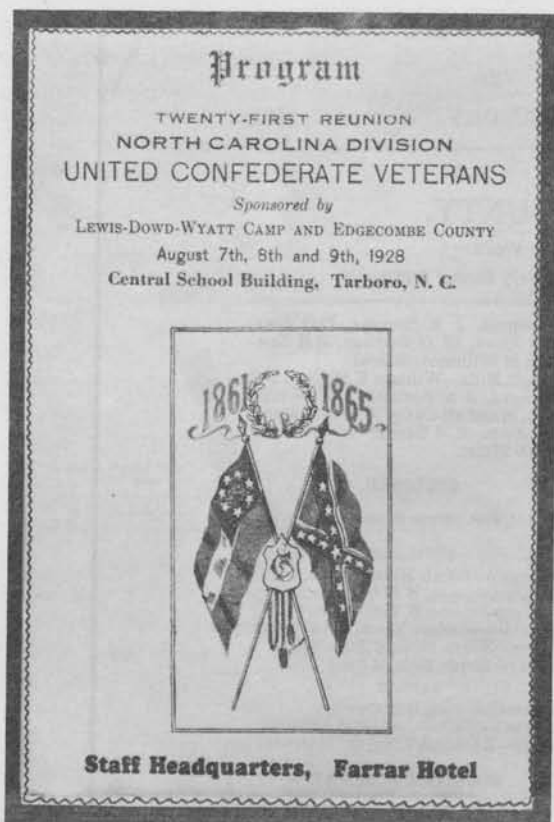
## MANUFACTORIES.

Kinds, Post Offices and Proprietors.

Blacksmithing, Shiloh, N G Sawyer.  
 Blacksmithing, Camden, H W Scott.  
 Blacksmithing, Camden, I M Forbes.

[Levi] Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, published regularly during the late nineteenth century, provides useful information pertaining to each county's government, private institutions, and farmers. Photograph of a page from the 1896 directory from the North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina Library at Chapel Hill.





Ephemeral materials, such as this program, provide valuable information and can be used effectively in exhibits. Photograph courtesy of Edgecombe County Memorial Library, Tarboro.

be of interest to the local history collection. Oral history is becoming an increasingly important method for recording local history, and taped interviews with area citizens can add a significant and valuable dimension to a local history collection. Typed transcriptions or summaries with at least minimal indexing greatly increase the usefulness of oral history tapes.<sup>5</sup>

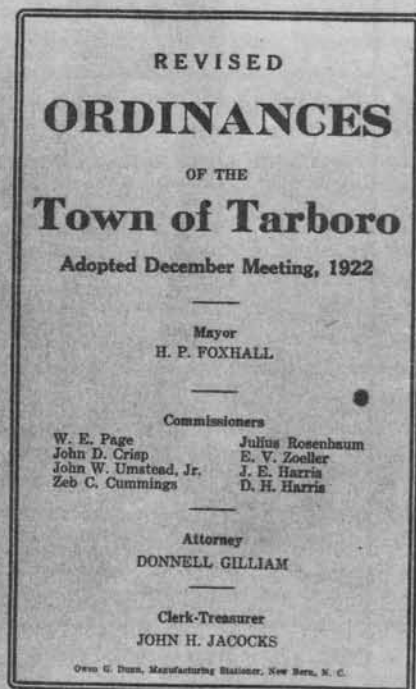
Collecting memorabilia can also present special challenges. Materials such as china, arrowheads, swords, clothes, and related items are usually more suitable for a museum. Local history collections should be careful not to accept such gifts if they lack the facilities to care for, exhibit, and store them. Libraries that do accept such items should handle them according to accepted museum standards.

Acquiring materials for the local history collection is one of the primary pleasures of the librarian's job. Many valuable items are not available for purchase, and the librarian will want to establish and maintain a network of collection supporters willing to donate or encourage the donation of materials. Such supporters may also

be urged to inform the librarian of potential acquisitions.

Individuals and local historical and genealogical societies are often eager to assist in acquiring materials and equipment if they believe the local history collection is operated professionally. Care must be taken, however, to emphasize to such donors that all acquisitions must be compatible with the collection development policy.

Area book dealers should be asked to advise the library when significant local history publications become available. Used and rare book dealers can prove extremely useful in obtaining out-of-print titles.<sup>6</sup> Periodicals such as *The State* (magazine), *The North Carolina Historical Review*, *North Carolina Libraries*, *The North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal*, local historical and genealogical society publications, and area newspapers should be examined for reviews of books and pamphlets appropriate for the collection. The librarian will want to ask to be included on publishers' catalog mailing lists.



Local government publications, including ordinances, can shed light on a town's physical aspects and important issues affecting its citizens. Photograph courtesy of Edgecombe County Memorial Library, Tarboro.

Contact should be maintained with municipal and county government departments, and local newspapers should be read for notices of document publications. An organized check-in system will be useful in monitoring receipt of serial local government publications, such as the county hospital newsletter or police department quarterly reports. The North Carolina Division of State Library's *Checklist of Official North Carolina State Government Publications* is currently the best source for learning about new state documents.<sup>7</sup>

A library that has carefully planned the development of its local history collection will be aware of what services it can and cannot provide. The collection will be more wisely selected, better organized, and more valuable to users if its development is focused and controlled rather than haphazard. Of course, some flexibility will always be necessary, and a collection will have to change as its patrons' needs and wishes change. But an energetic and research-oriented librarian, aware of the collection's purpose and the means to accomplish it, will be equipped to reach the ultimate goal of helping patrons understand their community through a clear knowledge of their past.

## Technical Services

Special collections require special treatment. When a library attempts to collect, preserve, and make accessible a wide variety of materials pertaining to a locality, certain aspects of technical services may vary from standard library procedures. Particular attention to cataloging and classification procedures enhances the accessibility of many local history materials, while special supplies and equipment help insure that the materials collected and cataloged will be preserved for generations to come. Time and money spent may seem excessive to those who normally deal with the general collection of a public library, but the technical aspects of local history work must be viewed as a long-term investment vital to the preservation of the history of a place.

### Cataloging and indexing.

Finding aids are the backbone of a good local history collection. If the collection is located in a separate room, a dictionary catalog should be provided there. The catalog might contain distinct sections for maps, photographs, or other resources housed as distinct groups within the

collection. The catalog can also assist researchers in finding information hidden in books or periodicals with no indexes. Analytics can be used to call attention to articles of local interest in various periodicals or to portions of monographs.

The challenge of cataloging local history materials can be met in a variety of ways. Many public libraries in North Carolina acquire their catalog cards from various vendors, and soon cataloging will be widely available online. In many cases, though, cataloging for materials found in the local history collection is not available from these sources. The *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*, second edition (AACR2), offers the easiest solution to the problem of cataloging rare books, obscure pamphlets, maps, photographs, and broadsides. If staff time is limited, however, placing some of these materials in a vertical file may be the only practical means of providing access.

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Some ephemeral items, tickets and advertising materials, for example, can be assigned form headings since some patrons request material this way and the form often reveals subject content.

The choice of the subject headings can be challenging. Most libraries use Library of Congress subject headings. This system allows for headings subdivided by places and includes a list of subheadings that are appropriate under place names. Some librarians, on the other hand, believe that subject headings should grow out of the material in the collection, thus reflecting the community in question. Once headings have been established, they become the key to the entire local history collection and can be expanded as new materials are added or as new subjects become important locally. They can also be subdivided by date or by proper name. This practice is particularly important in the clipping or vertical file, where references to the history of a place, its industries, schools, and other institutions can become unwieldy. Whatever headings are chosen, consistency—achieved with the help of an authority file or thesaurus—is essential. It must be remembered, also, that automated systems may not have provisions for deviations from standard practices.

Classification schemes, too, need to be considered carefully. Regardless of whether a separate

catalog is maintained for the local history collection, call numbers for local history materials should begin with such letters as "LH" or "NC." In addition, many public libraries use abbreviated Dewey classification numbers and a one-letter Cutter system. Local history librarians should insure, however, that the classification numbers they use are full enough to differentiate similar subjects or separate items by place or institution.

Indeed, the need for full classification numbers is especially important in the genealogy section. Many patrons are interested in finding works on particular families or guides to the records of a county. The classification system can allow family histories or genealogies (Dewey number 929.2) to be arranged alphabetically by family name if the Cutter number is based on that name, instead of on the author's last name. Some libraries begin the Cutter of a book containing information about more than one family with "A1" and segregate such books at the beginning of the family history section. Then the first two letters of the author's last name can be added.

Grouping books by county is just as simple. The Dewey Decimal Classification's Table 2 lists

numbers for every county in the United States, which can be used in the genealogy section to keep together books pertaining to a particular county. Such numbers, unfortunately, can become too long. It may be appropriate to devise an alternate system, perhaps by assigning each county in the state a number based on its position in an alphabetical list of counties or by using a combination of Dewey, state number, and county name abbreviation (i.e., N8cur for North Carolina-Currituck County). The local history librarian should keep in mind that authors of genealogical books often produce many volumes pertaining to one county or a group of counties. Proper classification is needed to keep books about different counties separated and to avoid giving the same call numbers to more than one book.

Like the card catalog, special indexes can unlock a storehouse of information. An index of biographical references found in books in the local history collection makes research easier. Even more essential are indexes of local newspapers—a most important record of daily life. Because creating an index is very time consuming and expensive, the local history librarian should



The Document Restoration Laboratory at the North Carolina State Archives employs such techniques as deacidification and encapsulation to stabilize and protect acid-laden or damaged documents and printed materials. *Photographs courtesy of the State Archives, Raleigh.*



carefully weigh priorities before such a project is begun.<sup>8</sup>

Procedures should be thoughtfully considered and recorded in a manual for indexers. The librarian must decide what will be included in the index entries. Some indexes contain only the subject heading, title of the article, name of the newspaper if more than one is indexed, date, and page number of articles. Others include an abstract. The local history librarian must also choose between a manual and a computer-generated index. Card files have commonly been employed in the past, but the use of microcomputers is a viable alternative.<sup>9</sup>

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## **... the need for full classification numbers is especially important in the genealogy section.**

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### **Preservation**

If a library makes a commitment to collect local history materials, it should ensure that they are properly cataloged, protected, and preserved. Several organizations publish technical advice and sponsor consultants who can visit libraries to make recommendations on how a particular situation should be handled. The Society of American Archivists' *Basic Manual Series* and the *Technical Leaflets Series* prepared by the American Association for State and Local History are especially helpful. The Southeastern Library Network (SOLINET) and the North Carolina State Library sponsor consultants who can give advice by telephone and sometimes hold workshops pertaining to preservation of library materials.<sup>10</sup> Visits to other libraries often yield excellent ideas for administering local history collections.

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## **Finding aids are the backbone of a good local history collection.**

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At times the local history librarian will be confronted with acid-laden or badly damaged materials. While some minor conservation efforts can be undertaken by the local history librarian, document restoration is a specialized field and should be left to professionals. The document restoration laboratory at the North Carolina Division of Archives and History does such work at a modest fee.

The librarian should strive to purchase high-quality equipment and archivally sound enclo-

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sures for all formats of materials. The following sections include suggestions for handling various formats. The reader should also consult literature listed in the bibliography and examine vendors' samples before making choices.

### **Books**

Books constitute the mainstay of the local history collection. Their treatment depends not only upon such readily identifiable factors as the nature and condition of their bindings and the quality of their paper, but also upon the less obvious factors of age, rarity, and frequency of use. Many titles will be new, while gift books can range from recent publications to old, musty volumes with torn or missing pages and broken bindings.

Simple procedures can add to the life of most books. For example, staff members and patrons should be asked to avoid pulling books from shelves by the tops of their spines. Oversize volumes should be shelved upright or flat—never with their spines pointing upward. Moreover, accidental damage can be minimized if book trucks are not overloaded.

Regular maintenance well within the capabilities of every library can prolong the life of any



book. All books should be dusted as often as necessary; the librarian should do this in a way that minimizes the possibility that dust will settle on the books again. Leather bindings require additional care. If they are dirty, they can be cleaned with saddle soap. Dry leather bindings can be treated safely with potassium lactate and a preservative consisting of neat's-foot oil and anhydrous lanolin.<sup>11</sup>

Beyond regular maintenance, the local history librarian should also minimize alterations to, or library markings on, rare or valuable books. Pages with minor tears should be mended with special archival-quality tape, never with common pressure-sensitive tape. Call numbers can be typed on acid-free identification slips rather than on traditional spine labels. Original bindings should be saved if possible. Vendors of archival supplies offer acid-free board that can be fashioned into sleeves or boxes to protect books with fragile bindings or loose pages. Custom-made boxes are also available.<sup>12</sup>

In some cases, however, rebinding is the most practical option for preservation. Binderies should be instructed to avoid binding books too tightly and to minimize the trimming of pages. Modern paperbacks, in particular, can be bound to prolong their shelf lives. The local history librarian should ask the bindery to bind paperbacks in their covers or to retain the covers for mounting because they are often attractive and informative. Bindery funds, when limited, should be reserved for periodicals.

Frequently, the pages will be so brittle that a book cannot satisfactorily be protected. In such an instance, microfilming is probably the best alternative for preservation, but a brittle book replacement service might be preferable.<sup>13</sup> Such a company will photocopy the pages of any book with text area less than 11x17 inches and bind the acid-free photocopies with a fabric chosen by the client. All materials used in making the replacement copies are archivally sound.

## Pamphlets

How the library catalogs and houses pamphlets depends on such factors as their age, rarity, condition, and usefulness to patrons, as well as on the number of pamphlets in the collection. The financial resources of the library and the availability of staff also affect these decisions.

The local history librarian must decide whether pamphlets will be interfiled among books, shelved in a separate area, or kept in a

vertical file. If pamphlets are shelved apart from books, a "p" or some other symbol should be added to the call number, so staff will know where to locate and reshelve them. If pamphlets are added to the vertical file, the subject headings should be lightly penciled on their covers or title pages so staff can return the pamphlets to their proper locations.

Old and rare pamphlets, as well as those that will be heavily used, should be cataloged and placed on shelves, if possible. If pamphlets are bound, the bindery should be instructed to retain covers and avoid trimming the items. In many cases, however, it is cheaper and more desirable to enclose a pamphlet in a protective binder. The local history librarian should never attach pamphlets directly to the gummed cambric flaps of commercially available pamphlet binders. Eventually, the covers of pamphlets bound in this manner will break off at the edge of the gummed flap. Two alternatives are recommended. The library can acquire acid-free pamphlet binders and attach acid- and lignin-free envelopes to the gummed cambric flaps. Then the pamphlet can be slipped into the envelope. In this case, the pamphlet is accessible and its integrity is maintained.

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## Unwieldy, rare, or fragile paper material often forms a significant part of local history collections.

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On the other hand, the local history librarian can purchase a relatively inexpensive, acid-free pamphlet binder in which a pamphlet can be sewn or stapled in a matter of seconds, thus saving staff time. The heavy boards protect the pamphlet, but the pamphlet can be removed if necessary.<sup>14</sup> Some librarians, however, avoid stapling especially valuable materials, because pages can be torn away from the staples.

Fragile pamphlets require special care. They should be shelved so as to avoid unnecessary pressure from adjacent materials. For this reason alone, some libraries prefer to shelve pamphlets separately from books. If a pamphlet's covers are brittle, the librarian may want to place the pamphlet in a folded sleeve of acid-free paper, which in turn can be slipped into the envelope of a binder made especially for this purpose. In such a binder, the opening of the envelope is adjacent to the spine, rather than at the top. If covers have become detached, it may be wise to have them deacidified and encapsulated so they can be placed in a pocket attached to one board of the

pamphlet binder.

Regardless of the type of binder chosen, it will need proper labeling. In most cases, because of the narrow spine, the call number will have to be attached to the front cover of the binder. A label containing the pamphlet's title should also be affixed to the front cover. Library markings on rare pamphlets should be kept to a minimum.

## Clippings and Vertical File Materials

The vertical file, usually kept in filing cabinets or document cases, is an indispensable component of a good local history collection. These files usually contain separate sections for clippings and such ephemeral items as pamphlets, programs, brochures, typescripts, tickets, and advertising material. Frequently, though, all sorts of materials are interfiled. Whichever system the librarian chooses, separate subject and biography files can be created to facilitate filing and retrieval.

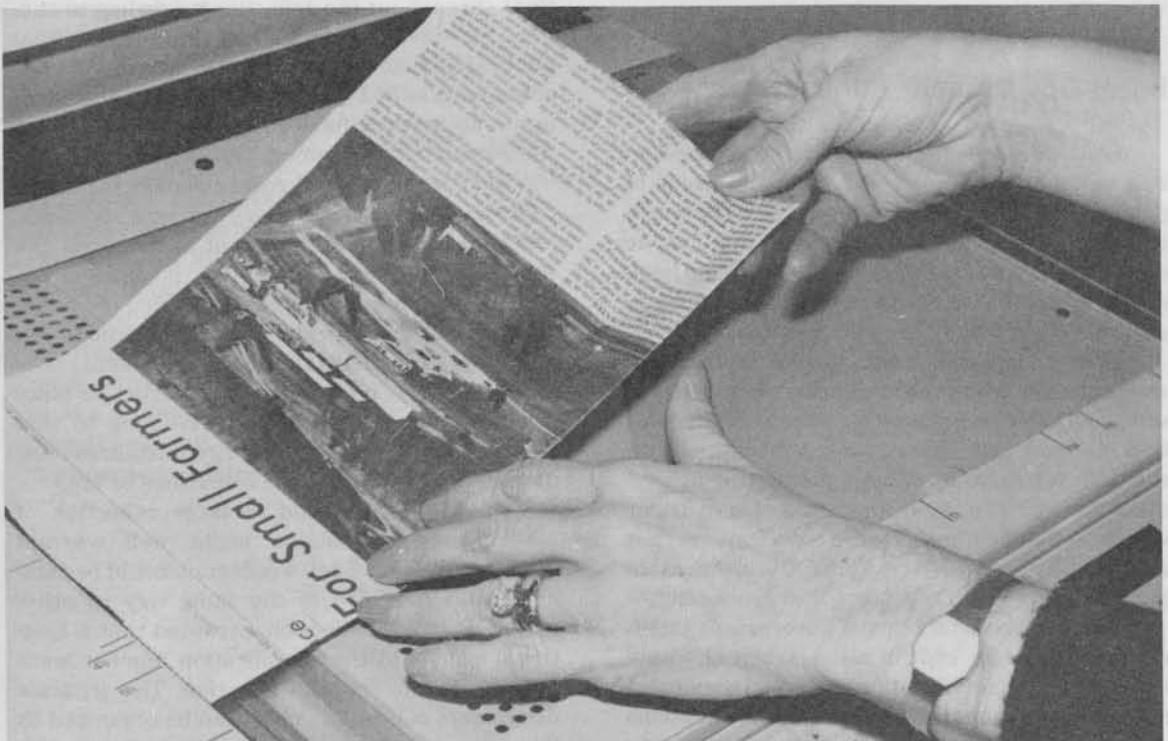
The clipping file is an excellent source of information for local history, particularly if local newspapers are not indexed. Even if indexed,



Newspaper clippings will find eager users, especially if the newspaper in question is not indexed. *Photography by R. E. Klett, Wadesboro.*

patrons often prefer examining a clipping to looking up an article on microfilm. The librarian should regularly scan area newspapers for articles pertaining to local people, history, industries, businesses, churches, schools, organizations, government, and other germane topics. Local or regional magazines, including *The State* and *We the People of North Carolina*, are often excellent sources of local history.

Traditionally, many librarians have clipped and pasted articles on manila tagboard or other



If sufficient staff or volunteer time is available, articles can be photocopied onto acid-free paper and bound as a permanent record. *Photograph courtesy of R. E. Klett, Wadesboro*

paper; large articles have been placed in manila envelopes. If enough staff or volunteer time is available, however, the library may wish to consider a more permanent approach. Articles can be neatly clipped and pasted, column by column, on cheap paper and then photocopied onto Permalife® Bond or some other type of acid-free paper. When photocopying clippings, if the library allows sufficient free space on the left side of the photocopies, eventually they can be bound as a permanent reference tool. This approach frees the library from the long-range problem of treating clippings that have deteriorated because of their high acid content.

The vertical file can also be used effectively to house and make accessible ephemeral materials. Often they do not merit processing, but still provide valuable information. Ephemera can be assigned a form or subject heading, which should be lightly penciled on the item. These can then be placed in acid-free file folders or envelopes that contain the heading neatly printed or typed on the folder labels.

To promote access, a list of subjects contained in the vertical file should always be made available to patrons. A micro-computer can be used to keep such lists up-to-date. Some librarians may want to place subject cards for vertical file materials in the public card catalog.

## Local Government Publications

Local government publications can be treated in a variety of ways, depending on the needs of patrons, the size of the collection, and the availability of staff and library funds. They can be added to the vertical file, integrated into the book and pamphlet collections, or designated as a separate collection.<sup>15</sup>

Before a choice is made, the librarian should assess patron needs and the library's priorities for service. Careful consideration should be given to how patrons use government publications. Do they ask for them by subject content or by creating agency? The librarian should also consider whether classification schemes have features that are compatible with the library's objectives in regard to access, arrangement, and processing.

Unique characteristics of government publications should be kept in mind. When choosing cataloging and classification methods, the librarian must remember that government publications are produced in monographic and serial formats. Any approach to bibliographic control of both

types should adhere to standard procedures. Most publications have paper covers and therefore must be protected if they are used frequently. If they are shelved, they can be kept in pamphlet boxes, bound, or placed in pamphlet binders.

Perhaps the easiest approach for libraries with limited staff and financial resources would be to add government publications to the vertical file or to establish a separate section of the vertical file for them. Publications can be filed by subject or under headings for municipalities or agencies. Headings should be consistent with those used in the local history collection's catalog, and a list of these headings should be made available to patrons. When public libraries decide to catalog government publications and shelve them, most find it easier to integrate them into the other holdings of the local history collection.

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## Planning is central to the organization and operation of an effective local history collection.

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Using this approach, government publications are cataloged and classified in the same manner as books and pamphlets. The Dewey classification provides for the dispersal of government publications throughout the collection according to subject, but it also allows for the collection of publications about government in one or two areas, such as 352 (local governments). The use of numerals beyond the decimal after 352 organizes the publications by subject.

Such an integrated government publications collection does have disadvantages however. Variation in size and format of publications can cause shelving problems. The integrated approach is more expensive than placing the publications in the vertical file. If publications are dispersed throughout the collection, patrons who seek a variety of information on a particular place will not find all documents pertaining to that place located together. Local circumstances must dictate whether to mix the collections or not.

On the other hand, a large collection of government publications might well warrant separate shelving. Such a collection could be cataloged and classified in the same way as other materials in the collection, provided that a locational symbol in the classification number leads patrons to the separate location. The separate documents collection could also be organized by their agency of origin. Although this approach does group documents in a way that reflects their



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contents, it is likely that some important information would be "lost" unless they are cataloged. In a rural county with many small communities, for example, the county planning department might produce planning documents pertaining to those communities, in addition to county-wide publications.

State or federal agencies sometimes publish documents pertaining to some aspect of a county or municipality. When choosing a method for housing and retrieving documents, local history librarians will want to make provisions for this type of material.

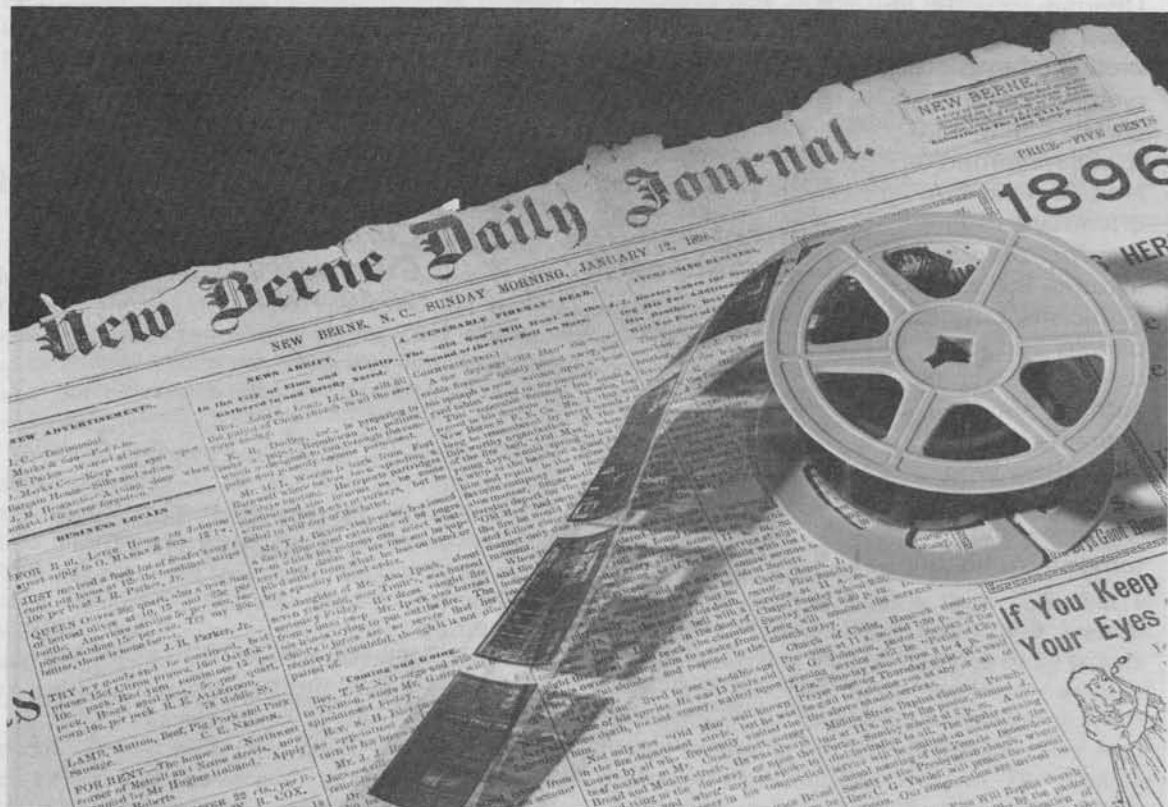
## Microforms

Unwieldy, rare, or fragile paper materials often form a significant part of local history collections. Large bound volumes may be difficult for patrons to use, and public handling may actually threaten the continued existence of certain items. Librarians are challenged with making information from such materials readily available to the public, while simultaneously preserving and organizing these resources for future use. In many

cases, the incorporation of microforms into the collection can be an ideal solution to such dilemmas. A microforms collection, when arranged and maintained well, can be functional, acceptable to the public, and economically advantageous.

Most libraries today already benefit from the space-saving potential offered by microforms. Extensive runs of newspapers and other periodicals, which would occupy many cubic feet of shelf space if retained in the original, full-sized paper format, are often purchased in microform from commercial vendors and require mere inches of space. Smaller newspapers, regional magazines, neighborhood newsletters, and similar local periodicals acquired by history collections, however, may not be available in microform from a vendor. Yet they too can take up much shelf space if retained in paper format.

Long runs of periodicals may require binding, another cost in saving paper copies. If unbound, periodical issues may be difficult to keep organized, while staff retrieval and patron handling of bulky bound volumes may cause difficulties. Faced with such disadvantages in retaining periodicals in paper format, local history librarians will want to consider having these items reproduced in microform.



Brittle, acid-laden newspapers are prime candidates for conversion to thirty-five millimeter microfilm. Photograph courtesy of the North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina Library at Chapel Hill.

In local history collections, potential candidates for reproduction in microform abound. Books, periodicals, newspaper clippings, vertical files, file cards, pamphlets, maps, and documents are some of the more obvious examples. The librarian will want to consider microform for any item containing information that needs to be available for frequent consultation, but whose repeated use threatens it with severe damage and possible destruction.

Many libraries today are turning to microforms not only to reformat paper materials facing damage from frequent handling, but also to preserve information originally published on inferior paper. Post-Civil War imprints contain inexpensive paper high in acid content, paper which in time begins to deteriorate, even if not subjected to patron use. Local history librarians may find some of their most important recent materials becoming increasingly brittle, while their institutions lack the funds to deacidify, laminate, and otherwise stabilize these items. Reproduction of such materials in microform may be the solution for saving the information they contain, since the original paper copies will probably soon be useless.

Decisions to use microforms do not come easily, despite the advantages this medium may offer. Local history collections, like other departments, usually have limited funding, and converting materials to microform is not cheap. When the decision to microfilm has been made, the library will certainly want to insure that the final product is a quality one.

An increasing number of commercial firms offer microform production services, and many perform high-quality work. Telephone book yellow pages often carry advertisements for such firms, and company sales representatives may occasionally solicit library business. Librarians, though, should be aware that not all services are equal and that the cheapest microform may not be the wisest purchase. Production standards vary greatly, and low-quality microforms are frustrating, if not impossible, to use.

High quality microforms will have properly focused images, will be reproducible, and will have been treated to guarantee permanence. Good manufacturers will have prepared the materials well before copying, taking care to unfold all page corners, remove paper clips, staples and other extraneous items, and insert appropriate target/identification sheets.

Few librarians are knowledgeable enough about microform production to ask all the relevant questions when contracting with a copying

firm. One simple precaution is to ask other librarians if they have used a particular firm or know its reputation. The firm itself can be asked if its work meets the standards set by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).<sup>16</sup>

When contracting with a microform producer, care should be taken to insure that the library will have future access to a negative copy of the microcopy produced. Since creation of the negative copy is the most costly aspect of microcopying, many libraries make the duplicate copy available for public use, with an agreement that the microcopying service retain a negative for use, should production of a replacement or duplicate copy ever be desired. Some libraries prefer to retain custody of both the original negative and a duplicate copy. If that policy is adopted, care should be taken to store the negative in a different location from the duplicate. Then, if fire or some other environmental factor damages the duplicate, the negative will be safe and accessible for use in replacing the damaged copy. Security negative microfilm of certain types of North Carolina newspapers, which meet specified criteria, may be accepted for retention by the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, provided that the negative film and reproduction rights to it are donated to the division. Libraries interested in this program should check with the division for details.

As previously mentioned, microforms acquired should be of high quality. Equipment required to use them needs to be cleaned and serviced regularly. Many local history collections





Special storage cabinets for microforms provide security and help prevent exposure to dust. Photograph courtesy of Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem.

find it useful to group their microform reading machines in one area, where lighting can be reduced, if necessary, for easier reading. Libraries with a large collection of microforms should be careful to provide an adequate number of machines to meet patron demand.

Special reader-printer machines for producing paper prints from microforms may also be necessary. Patrons accustomed to photocopying from original materials will be understandably frustrated if microform copies are substituted, but no copying capability provided. These reader-printers vary greatly in quality and cost, and local history collections will want to examine several types before purchasing.

Microforms, while not requiring the space that paper materials do, nonetheless need to be stored properly. ANSI standards specify appropriate temperature, humidity, and other environmental conditions. Care should be taken to prevent dust and dirt from adhering to microforms, since these can scratch them, and a schedule should be adopted for examining microforms for brittleness, color changes, tears, and other damage. Microfilm reels are best stored in individual boxes, and such boxes should be non-

acidic if constructed of paper. Plastic boxes, while a little more expensive to purchase, are more durable and often prove the better investment. Special storage cabinets for microforms are available from several library supplies dealers.

Finally, local history librarians should insist that their microform holdings receive cataloging equal to that of more traditional materials in the library. AACR2 rules governing microforms make it a relatively simple matter to include such materials in the library's card or computer catalog.

## Photographic and Audiovisual Materials

Establishing a policy for preserving and providing access to photographic and audiovisual materials can be one of the most challenging yet important goals of the local history librarian. Because few librarians treat these materials in the same way, those responsible for photographs, films, and recordings should study a variety of approaches before establishing a policy.

Photographic material, in particular, presents many problems. Photographers have used



many different processes for capturing images; some processes resulted in photographs that require special care. Moreover, photographs vary in size, format, and physical condition. Sometimes photographs are part of a collection of family papers or institutional records. These factors, as well as the presence of photographic negatives and the number of images in a collection, will affect how photographs are organized, stored, and processed.<sup>17</sup>

Basic principles can guide the local history librarian in developing and maintaining a photographic collection, and the reader may find some of the suggestions in this section helpful. The librarian should also read additional materials and visit repositories with well-developed programs.<sup>18</sup> Staff members of the North Carolina Collection in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Wilson Library and at the North Carolina State Archives in Raleigh would welcome the opportunity to explain their procedures. The Manuscript Department in Duke University's Perkins Library also maintains a noteworthy collection of photographs. Consultants, discussed in the section on preservation, are also available.

Their physical characteristics and importance in historical research make it important for

photographs to be stored under proper conditions and handled carefully. Recommended environmental conditions are similar to those for other materials in the local history collection. Ideally, photographs should be stored at a constant temperature of 65°F and a relative humidity of 35 to 40 percent. Rapid fluctuations in temperature and humidity should be avoided.

Local conditions will help dictate how photographs are enclosed, but all envelopes, sleeves, or folders should meet standards set by the American National Standards Institute. If sufficient money is available, each photograph can be placed in an acid- and lignin-free paper enclosure that has no alkaline reserve and no glued seam, or in a sleeve of polyester, triacetate, or polyethylene. An acceptable alternative, especially if the collection is large, is to interleave a small quantity of photographs with sheets of acid-free paper (again, with no alkaline reserve) and enclose the group in an envelope or folder. Flat storage in an archival-quality box is ideal, although care should be taken to avoid creating too much weight on photographs located at the bottom of a box. If they are strong, photographs may be stored vertically, but they must not be allowed to curl or bend because of lack of support. Boxes of photographs



If properly housed and cataloged, photographs can assist patrons interested in people, places, events, and objects. *Portrait collage by R. E. Klett.*



should be stored on metal shelving or wooden shelving that has been sealed with polyurethane.

Several formats of photographs require special treatment. Cased photographs, such as daguerrotypes and ambrotypes, should not be dismantled by inexperienced staff. If a case is broken or separated, it can be wrapped in acid-free tissue paper. These and all other cased photographs may be stored flat in archival-quality microfilm boxes. Oversize photographs can be interleaved with acid-free tissue inside large folders and stored in the drawers of a map case or in oversize boxes made of acid-free board.

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### **Photographers have used many different processes for capturing images; some processes resulted in photographs that require special care.**

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Photograph albums, though often in poor condition and filled with acid-laden pages, should not be dismantled. Doing so might prevent a researcher from fully understanding the historical context of the group. Often pages can be interleaved with archival quality tissue paper, but care must be taken not to overfill the album, thereby creating stress. Making copy prints or microfilming are two solutions to the problem of using deteriorated albums. Originals should be retired from use once either of these steps has been taken. Photograph albums should be stored flat in acid-free document cases.

Glass negatives and glass lantern slides must be handled with care and safely stored. Negatives should be placed in strong paper enclosures and stored vertically in sturdy boxes, preferably metal containers with grooves especially designed to accommodate the negatives. Wooden boxes should be used only if they have been coated with polyurethane. If the negatives are broken or cracked, they can be sandwiched between two pieces of window glass. Filmoplast® tape, available from suppliers of archival materials, can be used to tape each edge of the sandwich. A lantern slide consists of a positive image on one piece of glass, taped to a plain piece of glass to protect the emulsion. The exterior sides of the glass can be cleaned with a damp cloth. Filmoplast® tape can be used to replace old tape, if necessary. Slides should be stored vertically in boxes, but it is not necessary to put each slide in an individual sleeve.

Cellulose negatives deserve special attention. Cellulose nitrate film, manufactured between

1889 and 1951, is very unstable. As it deteriorates, it releases nitrogen dioxide and nitric acid. Such film should be removed from the local history collection and refrigerated until it is copied or destroyed. Although the film is sometimes labeled "nitrate," it can also be recognized because of deterioration. Nitrate film often turns a yellow-brown color, becomes tacky, and generates a viscous froth. Simple tests can be used to ascertain whether negatives are made of cellulose nitrate.<sup>19</sup> Cellulose acetate negatives, also known as safety film, were produced to replace dangerous nitrate negatives. They should be stored in acid-free paper or plastic enclosures. Negatives for different formats (photographs and photograph albums, for example) should be kept separate.

Motion pictures, videotapes, and slides, though perhaps not as common as photographs in local history collections, should also be handled professionally. Films should be wound on cores and stored flat in aluminum or stainless steel containers. Although major cleaning and restoration work should be left to a film laboratory, films can be cleaned in the library with a piece of rayon plush cloth and commercial film cleaner. Old films should never be used before a copy is made.

Most videotapes do not meet archival standards for permanence, but several precautions can prolong their usefulness. They should be stored flat. Because the tapes are slightly damaged as they pass the decoding heads of videocassette players, reference copies should be made of videotapes that will be viewed frequently. Fast-forward or fast-reverse speeds tend to stretch videotapes, so they should be played only at regular speeds.

Thirty-five millimeter or two-by-two-inch slides should be kept out of light to the greatest extent possible. The image itself should never be touched. Slides are probably best stored in Saf-T-Stor® protectors made for hanging files or ring binders. Made of polypropylene, these translucent and chemically safe sheets protect the slides from dust and dirt and make viewing safe and easy.

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### **(Cellulose nitrate film) should be removed from the local history collection and refrigerated until it is copied or destroyed.**

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Photographs and related sources can be arranged and cataloged in a variety of ways. Probably the easiest way to arrange and retrieve photographs is to file them by subject. Many pho-



Cased photographs, such as this ambrotype, require special care. They should never be dismantled by inexperienced staff members. *Photograph courtesy of the North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina Library at Chapel Hill.*

tographs reflect more than a single subject, however, so it can be difficult to decide how they should be filed. Furthermore, such a practice results in the dispersal throughout the photograph file of a discrete collection of photographs, and doing so might compromise the value of the collection.

One solution to such problems is to file all photographs in the order in which they are accessioned, keeping collections of photographs as a group within the accession order arrangement, and providing intellectual access through a subject index keyed to accession numbers. If this approach is chosen, all folders, envelopes, and boxes should be clearly marked with the accession numbers of the images contained therein. Arrangement and cataloging should achieve two goals—access to and protection of photographic materials. Full cataloging data will allow the researcher to determine whether a photograph should be examined, thus reducing unnecessary wear and tear on the collection.<sup>20</sup>

Professional considerations or the wishes of donors will occasionally warrant the segregation of groups of photographs. It would be unwise, for example, to destroy the provenance (information related to the creation or use of historical records) of a group of photographs and assorted

papers by dispersing them throughout the local history collection. If such a collection were deemed more appropriate for the library's local history collection than for an archival repository, the local history librarian might choose to establish it as an archival collection. Photographs in such archival collections should be stored in the same manner as those in the photograph file. An entry for the entire archival collection would be placed in a file for the local history collection's small archival collections, but entries for individual photographs or groups of photographs in the archival collection could also be placed in the photograph card file, in accordance with procedures established for photographs.

Caution should be exercised in handling and exhibiting photographs and related materials. Patrons should be asked not to touch emulsions and to handle photographs carefully. As funds permit, duplicate prints of the best old photographs in the collection may be produced and the originals retired from use, or photocopies of the photographs may be made and organized for reference. Use of microfilm or microfiche reference copies can avoid considerable wear on original prints. If patrons request copies of photographs, the local history librarian should arrange to have the copy made, perhaps by a local photographer

who can be trusted to care for them properly. Unless lighting and exhibit case glass have ultraviolet light filters, it is usually best to display copies rather than original photographs. Matting and mounting can also damage photographs.

In addition, librarians should be aware of a few basic principles pertaining to the storage of oral history tapes and other recordings. Cassette tapes of an hour's duration (C-60) are preferable to longer-running tapes because they are less likely to become tangled or print through. Ideally, these recordings should be transferred to 1.5 mil polyester reel-to-reel tape. Reference copies should be made for tapes that will be in high demand be researchers. Magnetic tapes of all kinds should be stored away from electrical motors or any electrical source capable of creating a magnetic field because such energy sources can cause damage to tapes or erase them.<sup>21</sup> Disc recordings also have long-term preservation requirements. They should be stored vertically at all times, and shelf dividers should be installed so that recordings do not lean against each other.

### **Oral history is becoming an increasingly important method for recording local history . . .**

According to one authority, "cellophane shrink-wrap, found on [the covers of] modern disks, responds to changes in environmental conditions and thus could cause discs to warp."<sup>22</sup> Ideally, then, polyethylene or paper liners with an alkaline reserve should be used to replace the original liners of vinyl discs. Paper sleeves are appropriate for acetate and nitrate discs.

## **Maps**

A well-organized and adequately cared for map collection nearly always proves to be one of the most popular components of a library's local history section. Many types of patrons—historians, genealogists, teachers, school children, public officials, and business people, to name a few—can be expected to ask for maps of the local area. A good local history collection will be able to accommodate such requests.

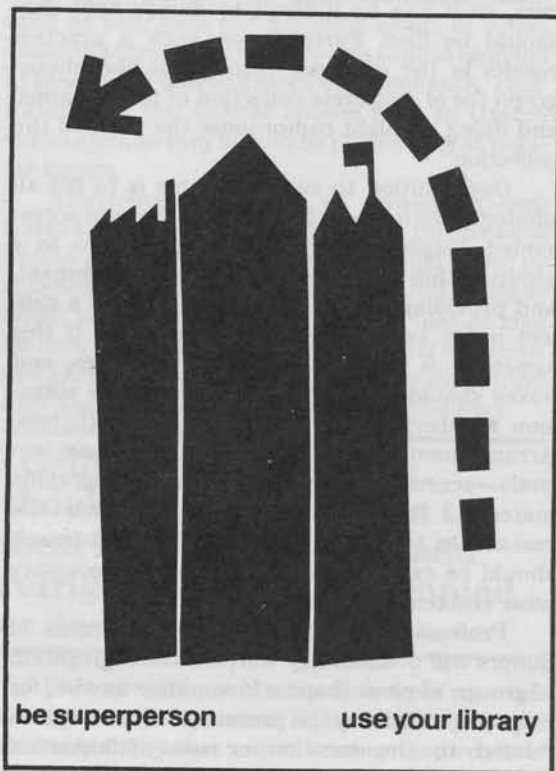
Yet maps, because they require treatment and handling different from that used with books and pamphlets, are often underemphasized. Librarians sometimes view them as hard to organize, troublesome to store, and difficult to preserve. Such objectives, however, can be overcome

through a thoughtful and systematic approach to building a map collection.

In ideal situations, libraries have sufficient staff to catalog their maps fully, using relevant *AACR2* instructions. Other well-staffed libraries may choose a modified level of formal cataloging. Catalog cards for the maps, including cards with subject headings, may be interfiled in the library's main catalog or in a special map catalog.

Many local history collections, nonetheless, often lack access to or have too few maps to justify formal cataloging. They must instead create a simplified map index card file. Such a file, while not providing patrons with complete cartographic data, can still offer enough description so that the desired maps can be identified and located quickly.

Before creating such a file, it is helpful to study the *AACR2* rules relating to maps to learn what cartographic data is recorded when full cataloging is performed. Librarians can then choose the types of information that would be appropriate to include in their file. The goal should be to include sufficient information about each map so that a patron can determine from the description whether a particular map is needed. Allowing a patron to eliminate maps without first having to examine them saves time not only for the patron but also for the librarian, who otherwise would have to retrieve and refile





unneeded maps. In most historical collections, librarians will usually want to include in the index file the title (if any), date, cartographer, scale, dimensions, subjects covered, and special features for each map. Except for very small map collections, it is usually desirable to assign standardized subject headings or dates (or a combination of the two) to the file cards and then arrange them accordingly, as in a regular card catalog.

Some collections organize their maps according to map subjects, while others prefer a geographic-based arrangement. Collection size and type of patron will influence this decision. It should be remembered, however, that a geographic arrangement allows a local history collection to subdivide maps by areas covered, while relying on descriptive subject/date headings in a file for topical or chronological access. Librarians often find a subject arrangement frustrating, since many historical maps may reflect multiple subjects.

If a geographic arrangement is chosen, area divisions can be created as needed. Depending on the size and scope of the collection, they might include neighborhoods, town or cities, counties, multiple county areas, and states. A call number scheme reflecting this arrangement can be designed and call numbers noted on the maps and

file cards.

In some cases it is desirable to separate extremely large or small maps from the main collection, thus using size as an arrangement division. Area divisions can still be used within the size divisions. Small maps that might otherwise be easily lost or misfiled can be stored in letter file boxes, with care taken to store such boxes flat to prevent curling or damage to map edges. Very large maps can be stored rolled-up in tubes, although this is more damaging to them than flat storage.

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## **Flat storage is the recommended treatment for all maps.**

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Flat storage is the recommended treatment for all maps. Vertical storage, even in vertical map or blueprint cases, should not be allowed, since it encourages curling and damage to edges, as noted above. Instead, horizontal-drawer map cases should be used. The best case is metal, with baked-enamel paint. Wooden cases are less desirable since wood can have high acid content. Cases with a number of shallow drawers are preferable to those with only a couple of deep draw-



Flat storage is recommended for all maps. Metal cabinets with baked-enamel finishes are preferable to wooden cabinets. Cases with a number of shallow drawers are more desirable than those with just a few deep drawers. *Photograph courtesy of Eastern Office, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Greenville.*



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**PONY RACE FOR BOYS UNDER 14 YEARS OLD**—Boys, get your ponies ready for the great Pony Running Race at the Coastal Plain Fair, Tarboro, N. C., Tuesday, October 30th.

1-4 Mile Dash: 1st prize \$12.50; 2nd prize \$10; 3rd prize \$7.50; 4th prize \$5.

**CONDITIONS**—Free for All. Edgemcombe County Ponies that do not weigh over 400 pounds. Riders must furnish weight's certificate showing correct weight of pony before pony can start. Boys over 14 years of age barred. Colored riders barred. No charge for entrance fee in the Special Pony Race.

**SPECIAL RUNNING RACE**—WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 31st:

1-2 Mile Dash: 1st prize \$25; 2nd prize \$20; 3rd prize \$10; 4th prize \$5.

**CONDITIONS**—Free for All. No limit to age or weight of horse or rider. Nothing but Edgemcombe County horses will be allowed to go. All professional riders barred. Colored riders barred. There will be no entrance fee charged for entries in the Special Running Race.

**SPECIAL RUNNING RACE**—THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1st:

1-2 Mile Dash: 1st prize \$25; 2nd prize \$20; 3rd prize \$10; 4th prize \$5.

**CONDITIONS**—Half Mile Dash. Free for All. No limit to age or weight of horse or rider. Nothing but Edgemcombe County horses will be allowed to go. All professional riders barred. Colored riders barred. There will be no entrance fee charged for entries in the Special Running Race.

**PONY RACE**—FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2nd:

1-2 Mile Dash: 1st prize \$12.50; 2nd prize \$10; 3rd prize \$7.50; 4th prize \$5.

**CONDITIONS**—Free for All. No entrance fee will be charged. Colored riders barred. No age or weight limit.

**NOTICE**—The Fair Association will not be responsible for accidents that occur in any of the above races.

L. D. HARGROVE, Secretary.

Frequently colorful and attractively printed, broadsides effectively communicate information about an area's history. *Photograph courtesy of Edgemcombe County Memorial Library, Tarboro.*

ers, since they allow maps to be stored in smaller groups. This prevents extra weight from being placed on the bottom maps and also facilitates map removal. Within drawers, maps should be placed in acid-free folders, with the fewer maps per folder the better.

## Broadsides

To the book-oriented patron, broadsides may appear to be ephemeral materials of little interest to libraries. Roughly defined as separately published, unfolded pieces of paper with printing on one side and intended to be posted or otherwise publicly distributed, they include announcements, campaign posters, handbills, news-sheets, proclamations, and other similar publications. As most local history librarians know, such items are worthy acquisitions, quite deserving of retention.

Frequently colorful and attractively printed, broadsides can effectively communicate information about an area's history. Often they can serve

as eye-catching exhibit components. Even unimaginatively printed ones can be valuable; they may contain text with significant names, dates, quotations, and other data.

Broadsides should be stored flat and unfolded. Vertical storage or rolling tends to bend or curl them. Horizontal-drawer map cases function well for broadsides and should be considered by libraries with extensive or unusually valuable collections. Even if a local history collection cannot devote such a case to broadsides, it should take care to protect its materials from environmental threats like strong light and dust.

Very large or very small broadsides may need to be stored in special drawers or areas, to make retrieval easier and to reduce misfiling. It may also be necessary to remove fragile items for special handling, and broadsides printed on especially stiff papers may have to be removed from the main collection to prevent damage to other items. Sometimes it may be necessary to trim sharp corners on some broadsides to prevent punctures.

Arrangement of a broadsides collection will vary from library to library, reflecting user needs, size of collection, and staffing. Well-staffed libraries may prefer formal cataloging for their holdings; AACR2 includes rules for broadsides cataloging. Other libraries, having fewer staff to process materials, will, nevertheless, want to establish an arrangement scheme.

An alphabetical title arrangement in most cases is undesirable, since many broadsides lack descriptive titles, if they have formal titles at all. Usually a subject arrangement, with optional geographic or chronological modifications, works best. As with other non-traditional materials in local history collections, librarians charged with organizing a broadsides collection may first want to visit libraries with established collections and discuss the merits and problems of various arrangements and storage policies.

Regardless of the arrangement scheme used, whether formal cataloging with Dewey or Library of Congress or locally created simple subject arrangement, it will be necessary to identify the individual broadsides. Extensive markings on a broadside should be avoided, with any marking done on the back (non-printed) side. It should be remembered that some inks will bleed through paper, and pencil marks are susceptible to fading and erasure. Many libraries prefer to make their call or identification numbers on low-acid adhesive stickers that have been applied to the back of the broadsides.

## Physical Environment and Security

When developing a local history collection, the librarian must always be aware of space limitations, security, and the physical environment in which the collection will be housed. The scope and nature of the local history collection will be greatly influenced by the size of the library in which it is located. Most libraries with adequate space find it convenient to have a special area dedicated to the local history collection. Whether the collection occupies a whole room or just three shelves, it should constitute a self-contained entity that is easy to recognize and utilize. Signs and displays help ensure that the local history collection retains its own identity while at the same time standing as an integral part of the total library collection. Security precautions taken for the library as a whole should also apply to the local history collection, although the uniqueness of this collection often makes it more vulnerable to theft and abuse.

The need for strict monitoring of the collection and awareness of patron activities cannot be approached with a cavalier attitude. Written reg-

ulations governing use of the collection should be distributed to patrons, and staff should make sure that patrons adhere to them. One special advantage of a distinctly defined local history area is the ease with which library staff can visually oversee patrons as they browse through and use the materials. Staff can offer assistance when needed, of course, and at the same time prevent abuse or loss of materials. This surveillance should act as a deterrent and not be overly obtrusive.

Staff limitations generally do not allow constant observation in every case, especially if the local history collection is small. Two approaches, however, can be used to safeguard especially valuable material. A staff member can find the information requested, photocopy it, and then return the original item to safekeeping; or, the librarian can require that the patron use local history material in a supervised area of the library. As a further deterrent to theft, positive identification should be required for this procedure. In any case, valuable materials should be secured, if not in a locked room, then in a locked filing cabinet or in the staff workroom.

Librarians fortunate enough to house their local history collections in separate rooms may



Locked cases can prevent theft of especially rare or valuable materials. *Photograph courtesy of Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem.*

find protective measures easier in some ways. Unless the staff includes a full-time local history person, these rooms can be kept locked except when in use. This tends to discourage the casual browser, and the serious researcher can be instructed by signs to request admission from appropriate library staff. Any library which limits the hours of access to its local history collection should publicize the time the collection will be open for use.

After space and security, the most important aspect of housing a local history collection is its arrangement within that area. The importance of clear and precise classification of materials has already been underscored. Shelving should allow flexibility for such special formats as oversize materials, document cases, and boxed items. A diagram indicating the location of different categories of materials and types should be posted.

A photocopying machine, if not available within the local history area itself, should be easily accessible elsewhere in the library. Much local history material tends to be unique and irreplaceable; it must be photocopied carefully, if at all. In the case of rare or unwieldy items, the librarian should do the copying. Copyright laws should always be observed, and posting a copyright warning near the copying machine will alert patrons to the law.



A microfilm reader/printer is a virtually essential piece of equipment in local history collections with microfilm holdings. *Photograph courtesy of Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem.*

The local history collection will, of course, need other equipment and furnishings. It should contain a sufficient number of large reading tables to accommodate local history patrons within the collection area itself. Map cases and vertical file cabinets should be in close proximity, so staff can retrieve materials quickly. Microform readers and reader-printers, however, are best located in corners or alcoves where lighting can be reduced and noise buffered.

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### **When developing a local history collection, the librarian must always be aware of space limitations, security, and the physical environment in which the collection will be housed.**

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In most cases, the local history collection has basically the same ventilation and lighting system as the rest of the library. Ideally, it will have a separate thermostat to allow temperature regulation, so as to protect its rarer materials. Proper ventilation, not only for patron comfort, but also for the prevention of moisture buildup around books, should be a seriously considered adjunct of any heating and cooling system. A good air filtration system helps prevent the accumulation of dust, which contributes to deterioration of materials. If the library houses its local history materials in a small, enclosed area without much ventilation, a dehumidifier will help maintain relative humidity at the recommended 50 percent range. Temperature should be kept within a 65°-68°F range. Lighting should be adequate for readers, but protective sleeves for fluorescent lights can be used to filter ultraviolet radiation, which can fade library materials.

Since public libraries in North Carolina file annual statistical reports with the State Library of North Carolina, library workers should maintain accurate accounts, not only of local history materials circulated, but also of how many people use the collection. A guest register for names and addresses serves as a good record of visitors and can be used as evidence of need for more funding and expansion of the local history collection. Visitors are also less likely to steal materials if their names and addresses have been recorded. If the register contains an area for the type of information the patron is seeking, it can also aid in planning collection development.



## Staffing

In "Guidelines for Establishing Local History Collections," developed by the Local History Committee of the History Section, Reference and Adult Services Division, American Library Association (June 1979), Section 5.1 reads as follows:

*The local history collection should be processed and maintained by trained staff. Professionals can be assisted by properly trained volunteers to provide services to patrons.*<sup>23</sup>

These guidelines are so general that librarians must still ask: "What qualifications should staff for a local history collection possess?"

Large libraries should have a professional librarian in charge of the collection, with sufficient support staff to develop it and provide full reference service during the library's operating hours. Most libraries, in actuality, are fortunate if they have a professional librarian who can be assigned to the collection for most of the time. In small libraries, a staff member with an interest in local history and genealogy can supervise the collection on a part-time basis, but will need appropriately trained volunteers to help the rest of the time.

In any case, the local history librarian should have a strong background and interest in history and will find an undergraduate major or graduate degree in history useful. The librarian should possess the following skills and attributes:

1. Knowledge of the community and its history, present characteristics, and associated bibliography.
2. Knowledge of the organization and preservation principles for books, manuscripts, photographs, maps, ephemera, and other local history materials.
3. Interest in and knowledge of indexing.
4. Ability to communicate well with patrons, staff, and people in the community.
5. Knowledge of the tools and methods of retrospective materials evaluation.
6. Ability to write and produce fliers, bibliographies, news releases and other publicity materials and the ability to design displays.

Some of the skills listed above can be acquired through workshops and other in-service training, and the local history librarian will want to attend such functions when possible. Such training will be especially important to the librarian in smaller libraries who is charged with building and maintaining a local history collection in addition to other duties.

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Another important attribute that the local history librarian should possess is the ability to cultivate and maintain contacts with local government and community groups, especially local historical organizations. Since important materials are often acquired as gifts, the librarian must become well known throughout the community as the person interested in preserving local history. Then people will think "library" rather than "trash" when they discover a box of old phone books in the attic.

The local history librarian's ever increasing familiarity with the community is the most important asset that this staff member can have. Knowledge of local materials held by other repositories, such as early church records still maintained at the church, can be developed only through persistent effort to "learn" the community. An awareness of individuals and organizations possessing and/or creating materials appropriate now, or in the future, for the local history collection must be cultivated continuously. Such personal knowledge by the dedicated local history librarian is impossible to replace with even the most detailed finding aids.

Staffing limitations, however, force many libraries to use general reference librarians or



other staff members in the local history collection, either on a regularly scheduled or substitute basis. When such is the case, the local history librarian should help those individuals to become familiar with the collection. A procedures manual or directory should be prepared and kept accessible, and directions for using specialized indexes

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### **The local history librarian's ever increasing familiarity with the community is the most important asset that this staff member can have.**

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and files should be written out and made available. It is also a good idea to inform such staff members of significant acquisitions, so that they will not be surprised and embarrassed when a patron asks to see that marvelous new resource of which the librarian has never heard. In large library systems, the local history librarian should be willing to serve as a consultant to librarians seeking advice on what state and local history materials are suitable for their branches. When fellow librarians are familiar with local history collections and with the basic state and local history materials, their feelings of panic when confronted by questions about their locality will be greatly reduced.

### **Volunteers**

Opportunities abound for volunteer service in local history collections, and the wise selection and use of volunteers can significantly enhance the development and maintenance of such collections. Many large libraries have formal volunteer recruitment programs; and potential volunteers with the requisite skills should be directed to the local history collection. Some libraries have access to court-appointed volunteers willing to perform community service as an alternative to jail sentences, and these volunteers may bring useful skills to the local history collection.

Volunteers, however, should be interviewed carefully before being accepted by the librarian, so as to ensure that their skills, interests, and personalities meet the needs of the collection. If accepted, they should be provided with a handbook of information about the library and a basic outline of what is expected of them and what they can expect from the library. Rules and privileges should be carefully stated.<sup>24</sup>

Volunteers can be used effectively on a number of tasks. They can assist with processing newspaper clippings, in acquiring publications, in collecting and transcribing oral history tapes, on special indexing projects, with minor repairs to collection materials, and in conducting preliminary research for answering correspondence inquiries. Close supervision of all volunteer work will ensure the collection's professional standards.

Recruiting volunteers can often be accomplished by advertising in newsletters of local historical and genealogical societies. Sometimes potential volunteers will approach the library and express an interest in working with the local history collection. General reference and circulation department staff should be asked to remember the local history collection's needs when patrons mention a willingness to volunteer in the library "if there were something for them to do." Civic organizations, such as the Junior League, are often good sources for volunteers with the requisite intellectual abilities and organizational skills. All volunteers should understand and accept from the start that their assignments will be designed to meet the needs and priorities of the local history collection and not necessarily their personal interests.

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### **... volunteers, excited by the interesting and challenging work they do, frequently prove to be excellent publicists and solicitors for the local history collection.**

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The local history librarian will want to maintain a list of short-term jobs for volunteers. It will then be relatively simple to find an appropriate task for a court-appointed volunteer, such as a three-hour typing or a twenty-four hour dusting and cleaning job. For a long-term project, a written task description should be prepared in advance. Such a description may prove useful in recruiting a volunteer, since it spells out what skills are needed and what is expected of the volunteer.

After long-term volunteers have been screened and selected, they should be carefully trained. If unfamiliar with area history, they should be asked to read several basic state and local histories and to acquaint themselves with the overall local history collection. They should be provided with detailed instructions for each task to be per-

formed. If adequately trained and given sufficient instruction initially, volunteers will need much less direct supervision by the librarian. Nevertheless, the librarian and volunteers should meet regularly so that the duties and performance can be reviewed and evaluated to ensure that all parties are comfortable and satisfied with assignments.

Librarians often feel that recruiting and supervising volunteers is more time-consuming than worthwhile. Keeping a list of short-term jobs so that volunteers can be utilized whenever available and carefully selecting and training long-term volunteers will save the librarian's time. Such preliminary planning and organizing can pay valuable dividends, since productive volunteers can complete many projects that might not otherwise have been envisioned, much less accomplished. And volunteers, excited by the interesting and challenging work they do, frequently prove to be excellent publicists and solicitors for the local history collection.

## Marketing

A carefully planned marketing program is important to every public library, and the local history collection, because of its interesting subject matter, is a natural area to market. The local history librarian should plan an ongoing marketing campaign designed to foster use of the collection and encourage citizens to donate local history materials.

The librarian should first establish resource files, which can be helpful in planning exhibits, programs, and publicity. One file folder can be maintained for each month of the year. Lists of locally important events and resource people can be kept in these folders, along with ideas for preparing exhibits or feature articles. The librarian may also want to maintain a file of ideas useful at any time of the year. In addition, a mailing list should be developed that can be used in promoting programs and services.

Promotion can take many forms. An attractive brochure describing the collection or carefully prepared, printed instructions on how to use the collection can bring in new patrons. Bibliographies on such topics as regional fiction or genealogy can be compiled as the need arises. In addition to promoting the local history collection through informal contacts, the librarian should be prepared to make short presentations to community groups.



Volunteers can be used effectively to perform a number of tasks. Here retired Durham County Library Senior Volunteer Iola Parker prepares a subject index to the Durham Historic Photographic Archives. Photograph by George Pyne, Durham.

From time to time, the librarian will wish to publicize the collection in the newspaper or on radio or television. A network of contacts in the various media should be developed, so that when an exciting program occurs or the library makes an important acquisition, the media will provide the best possible coverage. Newspapers can also be encouraged to establish a regular local history column.

The librarian should not overlook newsletters of local groups, such as the Friends of the Library, the historical society, or the genealogical society. These publications may have deadlines far in advance of a program, but oftentimes welcome a regular column on local history or news of the collection.

Fliers and posters, produced inexpensively in-house, can be effective in advertising special events. Fliers that double as posters are especially effective at achieving maximum advertising effect. Books of graphic designs or uncopyrighted pictures, which can be reproduced for fliers, should be available in the library's reference collection. Information on time, date, place (with location and telephone number), and admission limits, if any, should be included in any promotional materials about events. The advertising should empha-

size the word "free," since many people do not realize that a public library's services are free.

Distribution is another important aspect of marketing. The librarian should not rely solely on posters or fliers placed at the circulation desk. Mailings to individuals are especially effective, but clubs, schools, colleges, churches, and other institutions and organizations should also be contacted. If the library distributes a newsletter and/or calendar of events, information about local history programs can be included. Posters and fliers should be placed on bulletin boards around town, as well as at high traffic points in the main library and any branches. All staff members should be informed about local history programs so they can be more effective in passing information along to patrons.

The librarian should evaluate the local history collection's marketing program on a regular basis. Constructive and critical self-examination can only result in improved and more effective contact with the public.

### **Programs and Exhibits**

Programming requires careful planning. Before undertaking public programs, the librarian should 1) assess the goals of the collection and the library as a whole; 2) evaluate the needs of the collection and the library and the resources already available; 3) determine the needs of the community; and 4) choose an appropriate type of program, plan, execute, and evaluate.<sup>25</sup>

Programs can be as varied as the librarian's imagination will allow. Some programs can be viewed as a logical extension of reference service. Short courses that educate patrons on how to take advantage of specific materials in the collection will save the librarian time later. The librarian might also teach a short course on genealogical research or refer patrons to courses taught at a community college or the North Carolina Division of Archives and History. Workshops can be used to acquaint teachers with the appropriate resources available in the library for school children studying North Carolina history. Workshops also help teachers understand the limitations of the collection and become aware of the richness of materials available for special reports. In the process, the librarian will learn about the needs that teachers have for resources to enrich their curriculum. The librarian should be available to speak to classes on such topics as local history and basic techniques of genealogical research, and will want to maintain a bulletin board for posting notices of courses, workshops, and meetings of interest to patrons.

Special programs can be presented on a great variety of topics. In every community there are a number of free speakers available who can be listed in a resource file. Some libraries and their Friends groups present readings by local authors. Sometimes nationally famous authors will read at a local library without charge; however, a small honorarium to cover expenses should be offered if at all possible. A Friends group can be a good source of funding for locally oriented programs, especially if the librarian occasionally wishes to undertake a more ambitious program or series with paid speakers. Sometimes such a program can highlight a new acquisition or accompany a special exhibit at the library.

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### **. . . the librarian must become well known throughout the community as the person interested in preserving local history.**

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Interesting displays and larger exhibits are also useful in calling attention to the local history collection.<sup>26</sup> In particular, strong points or especially under-utilized materials in the collection should be emphasized, so as to acquaint the public with them. Varying the location of displays will likely introduce new patrons to the collection. Local historical societies are frequently willing to cooperate in mounting displays. Some hobbyists may welcome the chance to exhibit their local history-related materials.

Sometimes the local history collection may wish to develop or host a major exhibit. An in-house exhibit of this magnitude requires extensive planning and technical expertise. Here again, outside support may be available, with area colleges, universities, or state historic sites often willing to cooperate with the local history collection. Depending on the nature of the exhibit, publication of a catalog may be desirable; and it can serve not only as a source of information for patrons, but also as a permanent record for the library. A major exhibit will, of course, necessitate extensive publicity, perhaps extending to a series of lectures or other programs planned around the exhibit theme.

### **Fund Raising**

Special collections can always use money for acquisitions, as well as for financing special programs and exhibits. The local history librarian will want to be familiar with publications on grant-



seeking techniques and with potential sources for grants.<sup>27</sup> Before seeking funds from outside sources, however, the librarian will naturally need to seek approval from the library director.

Various types of financial aid can often be obtained locally. Letters or telephone calls to area banks, businesses, and industries can yield excellent results. Historical and genealogical societies are obvious sources of gifts. Library Friends groups will often support special acquisitions or programs. Some Friends groups conduct book sales that raise significant amounts of money. One library in North Carolina, using seed money provided by Friends, sold high-quality reproductions of two old area maps to raise money for the local history collection.

At the state level, the North Carolina Humanities Council<sup>28</sup> remains a good source of funding for special public programs. Its staff is also available to help libraries develop programs. The Council accepts proposals for major programs (over one thousand dollars) three times a year (February 1, June 1, and October 1), with draft

proposals due a month before each deadline. Proposals for mini-grants may be submitted at any time, but they should be received well in advance of the proposed program date.

## Conclusion

The authors hope that these pages will provide a philosophical foundation and practical advice on which librarians can build. Success in developing a local history collection, however, will depend in part on the librarian's professional development; participation in library and archival organizations dedicated to the preservation and use of historical resources; familiarity with current historical, genealogical, and library-related literature; and exchange of ideas among colleagues and people in the community. Public librarians should get involved now, so that knowledge of North Carolina's past will not elude future generations.




Interesting exhibits, such as this one tracing the life and civic contributions of a Coca-Cola bottler, are useful in calling attention to the local history collection and its resources. *Photograph courtesy of Edgecombe County Memorial Library, Tarboro.*



# Endnotes

1. Byron Dobell, "Local History Makes Good," *American Heritage* 37 (February-March 1986): 7.
2. Alice R. Cotten, "Collecting North Caroliniana," *North Carolina Libraries* 43 (Spring 1985): 29-31.
3. Census microfilm may be rented from the National Archives Microfilm Rental Program, P.O. Box 2940, Hyattsville, MD 20784 and the American Genealogical Lending Library, P.O. Box 244, Bountiful, Utah 84010.
4. Sources for Sanborn maps include the Library of Congress; the North Carolina Collection, Photographic Services Section, Wilson Library CB 3934, UNC-Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC 27599; and Chadwyck-Healy, Inc., 1021 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.
5. The North Carolina Humanities Council (112 Foust Building, UNC-Greensboro, Greensboro, NC 27412-5001) is a potential source of funding for public programs that include the collection of oral history tapes. See Willa K. Baum, *Oral History for the Local Historical Society*, 3rd ed. (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1987); and Baum, *Transcribing and Editing Oral History* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1977).
6. For a list of used and rare book dealers who frequently offer North Caroliniana, see Appendix.
7. Local history librarians will, of course, want to follow closely the development of the state documents depository system, authorized by the 1987 North Carolina General Assembly and to be operated by the State Library of North Carolina.
8. For additional information on indexing newspapers, see Thomas F. Armstrong and Janice C. Fennell, "Historical and Genealogical Gold Mine: An Index Project for a Small-Town Newspaper," *RQ* 22 (1982): 140-145; and John Newman and Patricia Richter, *Indexing Local Newspapers*, Technical Leaflet No. 107 (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1978).
9. The Durham Herald Company, publisher of the *Durham Morning Herald* and *Durham Sun*, in 1981 began producing *Ind-Ex*, a monthly name and subject index to its papers. Libraries can purchase its IBM software package for use in indexing local papers. For more information, write the company's library at P.O. Box 2092, Durham, NC 27702, or call (919) 682-8181, extension 305.
10. The Appendix contains addresses and telephone numbers of these organizations and a bibliography that includes some of their publications. The sections below that give suggestions for handling specific types of local history materials discuss appropriate supplies and equipment. A list of vendors is also included in the Appendix.
11. For simple instructions on how to clean and oil leather bindings, see Donald L. DeWitt and Carol Burlinson, *Leather Bookbindings: Preservation Techniques*, Technical Leaflet No. 98 (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1977).
12. For more information on containers for protecting books and other library materials, see Hedi Kyle, *Library Materials Preservation Manual: Practical Methods for Preserving Books, Pamphlets, and Other Printed Materials* (Bronxville, NY: Nicholas T. Smith, 1983).
13. Archival Products Company, P.O. Box 1413, Des Moines, IA 50305.
14. Such binders are available from Archival Products Company.
15. Most of the ideas in this section are discussed in greater detail in the following publications: Russell Castonguay, *A Comparative Guide to Classification Schemes for Local Government Documents Collections* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984); and Yuri Nakata, Susan J. Smith, and William B. Ernst, Jr., *Organizing a Local Government Documents Collection* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1979).
16. American National Standards Institute (1430 Broadway, New York, NY 10018). Other organizations which have established microforms standards and specifications are the Association for Information and Image Management (1100 Wayne Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910); the National Bureau of Standards (Office of Standard Reference Materials, Washington, D.C. 20234); and the General Services Administration (Specification and Consumer Information Distribution Branch [3FRI], Washington Navy Yard, Building 197, Washington, D.C. 20407). All these organizations offer publications of their standards for sale.
17. A detailed discussion of the history of photographic images and the administration of photographic collections is beyond the scope of this issue. For additional information, see James M. Reilly, *Care and Administration of 19th-Century Photographic Prints* (Rochester, NY: Eastman Kodak Company, 1986); and Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler, Gerald J. Munoff, and Margery S. Long, *Archives and Manuscripts: Administration of Photographic Collections* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1984), hereinafter referred to as Ritzenthaler, *Administration of Photographic Collections*. Most of this issue's discussion of photographs is based on these books.
18. Local history librarians reluctant to accept particularly valuable photographs may want to refer donors to statewide or regional repositories with established photographic collections.
19. Ritzenthaler, *Administration of Photographic Collections*, 117-119.
20. Elisabeth W. Betz's *Graphic Materials: Rules for Describing Original Items and Historical Collections* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1982) provides excellent guidance for cataloging format. Subject headings can be found in *LC Thesaurus for Graphic Materials: Topical Subjects*, compiled by Elisabeth Betz Parker (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1987).
21. Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler, *Archives and Manuscripts: Conservation. A Manual on Physical Care and Management* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1983), 46-47, hereinafter referred to as Ritzenthaler, *Archives and Manuscripts: Conservation*.
22. Ritzenthaler, *Archives and Manuscripts: Conservation*, 46.
23. "Guidelines for Establishing Local History Collections," *RQ* 19 (Fall 1979): 29-30.
24. The *Library Journal* publication *LJ Special Report #24, Volunteers in Libraries II*, contains helpful information on the use of volunteers, including chapters on administering programs and training. A set of seven microfiche, showing sample policy statements, forms, and job descriptions, is included with the publication. Also included are suggestions for assignments for volunteers.
25. Ann E. Pederson and Gail Farr Casterline, *Archives and Manuscripts: Public Programs* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1982), 8.
26. For guidance on designing exhibits, see Gail Farr Casterline, *Archives and Manuscripts: Exhibits* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1980); and Charles L. Baker, *Planning Exhibits: From Concept to Opening*, Technical Leaflet No. 137 (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1981).
27. Anita Gunn Shirley, *Grantseeking in North Carolina: A Guide to Foundation and Corporate Giving* (Raleigh: North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research, 1985), gives advice on grantseeking and detailed information about foundations.
28. A project planning packet can be ordered from the Council at 112 Foust Building, UNC-G, Greensboro, NC 27412-5001.

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## SELA Conference Announced

Catch "The Creative Spirit" at the SELA/VLA annual conference in Norfolk, Virginia, October 26-29, 1988.

"The Creative Spirit: Writers, Words and Readers" will emphasize books and authors throughout the conference. Rita Mae Brown (*Rubyfruit Jungle, High Hearts*), Pat Conroy (*The Prince of Tides, The Lords of Discipline*), and Clyde Edgerton (*Raney, Walking Across Egypt*), accomplished at the spoken as well as the written word, will appear as conference speakers.

Preconferences will be held October 25-26. Preconference topics include telefacsimile, interviewing, the public library planning process, and organizational impact of integrated library systems.

The conference committee is planning tours of area attractions and libraries to give you a complete picture of Virginia hospitality. A special conference poster and t-shirt will be available for sale.

For information on conference programs, contact Patricia Thomas, Tidewater Community College/Chesapeake Campus Library, 1428 Cedar Road, Chesapeake, VA 23320. For other conference information, contact Harriet Henderson, Newport News Public Library System, 2400 Washington Avenue, Newport News, VA 23607. 