Preservation Grant Deadline Extended

The 2014 NCPC Preservation Grant application deadline has been extended to March 15, 2014. Need money? Apply for a grant today.

Upcoming Events and Deadlines

- January 31: FOCos Consultation Application Deadline
- February 14: Heritage Preservation CAP Applications Deadline
- February 14: Museum Assessment Program Deadline
- February 28: Deadline for CCAHA Assessment Grant
- April 8: SNCA Annual Conference
- April 27-May 3: Preservation Week

Inside this issue:

- C2C Artifact Triage 2-3
- New NCPC Members 4
- NCPC Preservation Excellence Award 2013 Annual Conference in Pictures 5
- 2013 NCPC Conference 5
- Get involved with NCPC 6

2013 Preservation Grant Winner: UNC Wilmington

UNC Wilmington Randall Library Special Collections and University Archives contains rare books, manuscripts, and other materials that have historic or cultural significance for the Lower Cape Fear/Southeast North Carolina region, and the curriculum and history of UNCW. Randall Library was awarded a 2013 NCPC Preservation Grant to purchase three Image Permanence Institute (IPI) PEM2 dataloggers to establish an environmental monitoring program.

We decided to apply for an NCPC Preservation grant after Dr. Hal Keiner visited the library in 2012 as part of the Traveling Archivist Program. In his report he recommended purchasing dataloggers and software for all space occupied by Special Collections and University Archives.

The PEM2 temperature and relative humidity monitors are designed specifically for cultural heritage institutions. While preparing the NCPC grant application we explored other monitors but decided that the technical and educational support from IPI would best fit our needs.

What has been most impressive about our experience is the ease of use of these monitors. They literally worked out of the box.

We began monitoring in December 2013. IPI provides a free eClimatenotebook.com account with the purchase of a datalogger. Using the online software is fast, reliable and easy. This system will allow us to observe how temperature, relative humidity and other metrics change over the course of the year, create reports and interpret the data. These data will be crucial as we work with building management and library administration to plan more environmentally sound conditions for our special collections.

We are thrilled that NCPC has opened the door to the establishment of an environmental monitoring program at UNCW. Also in December, Special Collections and University Archives were notified that we were awarded a Preservation Assistance Grant for Smaller Institutions in 2014 from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This $6,000 grant will allow us to hire a preservation consultant to survey Special Collections and University Archives to make prioritized recommendations for improving collection care. Our data from the dataloggers funded by NCPC will be extremely valuable as we work with our preservation consultant.

By Adina Riggins
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January 31 FOCons Consultation Application Deadline
February 14 Heritage Preservation CAP Applications Deadline
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Feedback from NC Connecting to Collections’ (C2C) last fire recovery workshop in Buncombe County, November 2013, suggested some changes in the training our team provides to participants. One of these was to develop a clearer framework for fire recovery. Given the expertise of the NC Preserves readership, we want to present our ideas about a new system of artifact triage in the hopes that your insights will help us to continue to improve C2C workshops and the response activities of the Cultural Resources Emergency Support Team (CREST).

CREST’s artifact recovery efforts will begin with the evacuation of collection items from the damaged building. Although Heritage Preservation’s guidelines recommend artifact triage in place, practical experience with fires (including the Thomas Wolfe Memorial and the Chatham County Historical Society) has taught our C2C team that this is rarely possible. More typically, collections staff have a brief period of access to a building after a fire for object retrieval.

Our recovery teams’ second step will be to triage artifacts using a color-coded prioritization system to tag and stage objects according to their levels of damage and treatment needs. At times this triage may involve judgment calls by institutional staff and other artifact experts to determine whether the objects have enough value to the institution to warrant expensive and/or labor-intensive treatments.

Our artifact recovery exercises will follow the triage categories that the FEMA-coordinated Community Emergency Response Team uses in its post-disaster human rescue efforts. The colored bands at the bottom of the tag are perforated so that rescue workers can tear off the lower-priority sections that do not apply. C2C’s proposed artifact triage categories are Minor, Delayed, Conservation and Disposal. Please note that our use of this model is not meant to imply equivalency between the sanctity of human life and the significance of historic artifacts. Artifact recovery is a distant priority after human safety in post-disaster scenarios.

Artifact triage categories relate to the level of treatment necessary after a disaster. Paper tags and holding locations will reflect these categories during workshop training. Tags and colored tarps can also be produced for use during recovery in a real disaster scenario. These categories can be used to set up sorting areas and can help with the post-disaster artifact tracking process.

Minor: A quick survey of artifacts may indicate that many have weathered a fire or flood fairly well. Often these have been stored in archival or plastic boxes that protected their contents effectively. Sometimes the container will need to be thrown away and the objects it contained can be packed in a fresh box for transport. Acid-free housings are important for long-term storage. Containers for post-disaster transport primarily need to be clean so that they do not introduce damaging elements, but they do not necessarily need to be archival for short-term transport.
Delayed: Some artifacts may be returned to collection storage with one of several simple treatments. C2C training, handouts, and the Cultural Resources’ Emergency Support Team will help staff members learn these techniques. Note that each technique is only appropriate for certain materials.

- Air drying
- Brushing/ vacuuming (Do not use a brush in cases of soot damage)
- Soot sponging
- Rinsing
- Ethanol wipe
- Re-backing (in the case of framed works of art)
- Packing for freezing (this can buy time until staff has space for air-drying)

Conservation: A conservator’s expertise is often necessary for some artifacts following a disaster. The red tag will act as a stop sign for those at the recovery scene. Artifacts in this category will receive professional treatment before being returned to collection storage or exhibition. If the objects are to be shipped to a conservation lab or to a freezing facility, they must be packed carefully so that they do not receive further damage during transportation. For instance, broken ceramics or glass shards must be wrapped in tissue so that they do not grind against each other during shipping. The pieces should then be bagged or boxed together with enough padding to support and protect the materials.

Disposal: The “morgue” will be a short-term holding area for objects slotted for deaccession before eventual disposal. Institutional staff and leadership must agree that disposal is necessary and document the object’s condition for the formal deaccession process. Recognizable artifacts should remain in the morgue until that administrative and registration process is complete.

We hope that this triage framework will provide workshop participants with a clearer direction for the hands-on practice opportunities the session offers, and provide sub-groups with locations relating to the categories for the placement of each recovered artifact. Does this plan for a lengthy set of hands-on recovery exercises seem clear? Does it entice you to want to join C2C for our next fire recovery workshop in your region? What suggestions do you have to improve this triage schema? Email Adrienne Berney with your comments.

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Welcome New NCPC Members

**Jamestown Public Library** celebrated their 25th Anniversary in 2013. Their building, built in 1915, was originally one of the first two sites for rural standard high schools in Guilford county. It was rededicated as the public library in 1988.

Their mission statement includes their commitment to respecting the cultural and historical heritage of the community. Contact the library at 336-454-4815.

**The Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center** was founded in 1993 by Mary Holden to honor the spirit and history of Black Mountain College and to acknowledge the College’s role as a forerunner in progressive, interdisciplinary education with a focus on the arts.

The Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center and University of North Carolina Asheville’s Ramsey Library Special Collections are collaborating to digitize and make available for study materials from the BMCM+AC archives and permanent collection.

For information on the college or their exhibits schedule, visit their website or call 828-350-8484.

**Historic Jamestown Society** was chartered by the State of North Carolina in 1974 and is a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Mendenhall Plantation

“Our mission is to preserve the cultural and architectural history of Jamestown, and to increase public awareness of the influence of ‘The Other South’ that Jamestown represented.”

Tours are available. See their website for details or call 336-454-3819.

Information in this section came directly from the institutional websites of our new members. Please visit their websites for more information.

Pack Memorial Library Wins 2013 NCPC Preservation Excellence Award

The North Carolina Room at the Pack Memorial Library in Asheville was awarded the 2013 NCPC Award for Collection Preservation Excellence for its exemplary collection preservation efforts.

This award is open to libraries, museums, archives, historic sites, and other institutions in North Carolina with a mission to preserve cultural, educational, historical, or research collections of enduring value. Excellence is to be demonstrated by a sustained and significant commitment to preservation from the institution’s collection personnel and leadership.

In selecting the North Carolina Room at the Pack Memorial Library, the board recognizes an organization that has demonstrated an outstanding strategy for long-term preservation and conservation planning. We hope that the efforts of the staff and leadership of the Pack Memorial Library will serve as an inspiration to others in our state to be resourceful in achieving protection for our unique cultural heritage.
The 2013 NCPC Annual Conference was held
November 1, 2013, at the Friday Center at UNC Chapel
Hill. The theme, “First Voice: Collaborative Heritage
Preservation with Descendant Communities,” proved to
be very engaging and thought provoking. More images
from the conference can be found on Flickr. Do you
have a great picture or memory of the conference?
Share it with us on Facebook.
NCPC Needs You!

The success of our preservation mission depends on the participation of our membership. Volunteers establish meaningful connections with preservation colleagues and enhance the consortium’s effectiveness. Opportunities for NCPC member involvement include:

- Attend an NCPC workshop. Members receive a discount on registration.
- Volunteer to work on an NCPC committee.
- Follow NCPC on Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr.
- Recruit a new member.
- Help raise funds for NCPC.
- Send us your ideas for new programs or services.

For these and other ways to become more involved with NCPC, visit our website or contact Robert James, Executive Director, at robertjamesncpc@gmail.com

NCPC Fun Fact

Since 2006 the NCPC Preservation Grants program has awarded $37,540 to thirty-two institutions. Libraries, archives, museums and historic sites are all eligible to apply. Your institution must be an NCPC member to submit an application. The maximum award is $2,000.

The application process is simple compared to many state and federal grants. Just fill out a short questionnaire and get three letters of support. NCPC grants fund preservation or conservation assessments, environmental monitoring equipment, storage furniture, archival supplies and many other preservation related projects.

The deadline for applications has been extended to March 15, 2014. For more detailed information visit our Preservation Grants website. We have also made a slide show about the NCPC grant program, feel free to share this link with colleagues.