If I Could Turn Back Time:
Time Capsule Creation & Preservation

Marian Inabinett & Corinne Midgett
High Point Museum
Two Organizations - Two Buildings

YWCA building, 1961
Time capsule put in cornerstone 1961
Opened October 2020

Chamber of Commerce building, 1963
Time capsule buried 1969
Opened July 2019
Case Study #1: High Point Chamber

Time capsule organized for the 50th Anniversary.

Buried under the slab near an outside door.

Copper chest, soldered at all seams and locked.

No one remembered they had one or where it was.

Full; contents packed in.
Case Study #1: High Point Chamber
Case Study #1: High Point Chamber
Case Study #1: High Point Chamber
Case Study #2: High Point YWCA

Time capsule organized for the new building.

Attached to the back of the cornerstone.

Copper box, soldered at all seams.

No one remembered that they had one, but they were able to figure out where it was.

Box was not “packed.”
Case Study #2: High Point YWCA
Case Study #2: High Point YWCA
Recommendations

- Keep time capsule above ground
- Put time capsule on display
- Note location in official minutes, newspaper articles, etc.
- Include an inventory of the contents
- Include a variety of materials - papers, objects, photos
- Include testimonials, written stories, personal notes from employees, board members, clients, etc.
- Isolate materials in boxes/enclosures when possible
Resources

- Smithsonian Museum Conservation Institute: https://www.si.edu/mci/english/learn_more/taking_care/timecaps.html