



National Fire Heritage Center Newsletter

Introduction

Here we go again, more news. You will note that I have not clearly identified a publication cycle for this newsletter. I would rather keep you guessing. This is my third attempt to carry out the communications by keeping you informed of what is happening.

Booth at FRI

Within the next couple of weeks, we (some of us) will all be heading toward Fire Rescue International in Dallas. Vice President Bill Killen has been working very hard to get us a booth space. He has been successful in accomplishing that. The booth number is 5530. It should be easy to locate because it is at the 2:00 direction from the main exhibit hall entrance in the middle of the triangle of the booth spaces for USFA, IAFC Membership Services and Dallas Fire Rescue.

Acquiring a booth also put us in a position of acquiring liability insurance for our corporation which we have now added to our formal structure.

Wayne Powell has arranged for a banner for the booth and we have developed the beginnings of a tabletop demonstration that illustrates our operation. Frankly, we don't have a really good plan on staffing for the booth at this point other than the fact that several of us will be there and my wife has even chipped in and

stated she will be in the booth for a while. If any of you know Marie, I will guarantee that the booth will get talked about.

After having admitted that we don't have a real good staffing plan, I am looking for those of you who are members in general or those that are on our interest list to help me put together some form of plan. If you plan at being at the conference and can spare an hour or two, drop me an email and we will officially make you a "greeter". Lacking any better plan, we will likely improvise one on-sight that will rely on personal interests, friendships and perhaps a little bit of coercion. For those of you that might want to contact me on-sight my cell phone number is 916-799-5363. I will be there for the entire conference. Feel free to contact me anytime.

In the booth we will have a brochure and other information that discusses the organization as well as some samples of our newsletter and information on becoming a member.

2009 Network Seminar

The 5th Annual Fire Museum Network Seminar will take place in Phoenix Arizona from Saturday, November 14th through Monday November 16th, 2009. The conference will be hosted by the Hall of Flame Fire Museum with seminar headquarters at Phoenix Double Tree Hotel. They are offering a special rate of \$125 per night, single or double occupancy, including complementary shuttle service and breakfast.

On Saturday there will be a round of workshops and presentations at the hotel. That will be followed by a reception and dinner at the Hall of Flame Fire Museum. There will be a few workshops. I am planning on attending to expose the fire museum network to our efforts and to give us increased visibility and improve communications with the existing museums.

If any of you plan on attending the conference, please don't hesitate to let me know and maybe we can coordinate our efforts. Personally I am using free flights with Southwest Airlines and some of my freebie nights at the Double Tree.

Fund Raiser Discussion

Through the efforts of Robbie Robertson and as a result of discussion with various board members, there is a possibility that we might have located the services of an individual who might help us with our building fund, fund raising efforts. He is likely to be at our board meeting in October. Board members should be contemplating the approach we might take to develop a proposal for third party fund raising as part of next years planning efforts. If you have any ideas specifically, please forward them to me, Robbie Robertson or Wayne Powell.

Heritage Quilt

If you come to the booth, you will get a chance to see our quilt.



Tickets have now been printed that we will be making available for sale to interested parties at FRI and at any other opportunity that arises between now

and our October Board Meeting. If you would be interested in being a sponsor of some of those tickets, please forward to me your interest and I will make them available to you. We are intending to sell the tickets for \$5.00 each or 5 tickets for \$20.00. The tickets are printed so that the name of the purchaser will be on the stub and therefore they don't have to be present at our annual meeting to win. If we can read their name we are in good shape. I have also received a couple of free gifts from other parties who have suggested a second and third prize. I will be bringing those along to display in the booth.

We have lots of opportunity to sell tickets at this event. For example, there will be a meeting of IFE, VCOS, and the Fire and Life Safety Section at FRI. I would encourage all of our board members who wish to support this effort to think about taking a handful of tickets if they plan on attending any of those meetings. If any of you are planning on attending any workshops or seminars between now and our board meeting, contact me for tickets.

Grant Opportunities

Diana Robinson, the Librarian of the Academy of Fire Science at New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control has provided us with some interesting information about Grant opportunities. She reports: "The Division of Preservation and Access at the National Endowment for the Humanities announces a new preventive conservation grant program, Sustaining Cultural Heritage Collections, with a deadline of December 8, 2009. The program offers U.S. nonprofit museums, libraries, and archives, as well as state and local governmental agencies and tribal governments with humanities collections two kinds of awards:

*Planning and evaluation grants, with awards up to \$40,000

These grants can help institutions assess risks to collections and identify realistic approaches for mitigating them; examine passive and low-energy alternative to conventional, energy-intensive systems for managing environmental conditions; analyze existing climate control systems and the performance characteristics of

buildings and building envelopes to develop a plan for improved operation, effectiveness, and energy efficiency; and, evaluate the effectiveness of preventive conservation strategies previously implemented, including performance upgrades to systems and building envelopes. Planning and evaluation projects should involve an interdisciplinary team appropriate to the goals of the project. The team may consist of consultants and members of the institution's staff and might include architects, building engineers, conservation scientists, conservators, curators, and facilities managers, among others.

*Implementation grants, with awards up to \$400,000

These grants can support managing interior relative humidity and temperature by passive methods such as creating buffered spaces and housing, controlling moisture at its sources, or improving the thermal and moisture performance of a building envelope; installing or re-commissioning heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems; installing storage systems and rehousing collections; improving security and the protection of collections from fire, flood, and other disasters; and upgrading lighting systems and controls to achieve levels suitable for collections that are energy efficient.

Guidelines will be posted on the NEH Website in early September. Please contact the division for more information by emailing preservation@neh.gov or calling 202-606-8570. I am hoping that board members will be contemplating the thought of filing for an application. Ideas are appreciated.

Annual Meeting

Another reminder: our annual meeting is tentatively being planned as follows:

Location:	The Old Ambulance Building 300 South Seton Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727
Date:	Friday, October 2 nd , 2009
Time:	10:00 am

Expected Duration of Meeting: 4 Hours
Agenda: To be provided prior to attendance
Lunch: Up to individual (there are several restaurants close by) – we have also been approached with the possibility of a sponsored lunch at the Carriage House. (It could happen!) More on that to follow.

Our Own Historian

As a Heritage Center, we are constantly focused on history. Therefore, it is important to keep track of our own history. In recent conversations with Harry Hickey, he has indicated that he would like to provide that sort of service to our organization. It is all together appropriate that we consider Harry our historian for his pioneering work in getting this concept in front of a large number of people including us.



In this photo, Harry is seen receiving his Charter Member Pin from the organization. Harry has now announced his retirement from the ISO. He is now at his residence in Maryland. For those that would like to congratulate Harry on his appointment, please feel free to send an email to the attention of Ron Coleman I will make sure it is transmitted to Harry. Harry does not have an email address.

Harry Hickey Receiving Charter Member Pin

The Keeper of Culture

Recently a reporter for the Sacramento Bee (Carlos Alcala) wrote a very interesting article about “The Keepers of Culture”. The article focused on specialty libraries and discussed the historical development of these cultural libraries. Among the topics written about ranged from a State Railroad Museum up to and including a very small museum that deals with German American culture just over the last 150 years. The article suggests that these specialty libraries are often extremely important to people doing research especially when the library contains personal papers and documents.

It was interesting to note that in Sacramento County alone there are 26 specialty libraries.

Tips for Collectors

As a result of putting out some of the information in our last newsletter, I received additional tips about preservation. One document that was given to me talks about preserving paper. The author is Kim Miller, The Antique Automobile Club of America Librarian and it reads as follows:

“Sales literature and manuals: Many times in the library, I am asked about safe storage for “paper” – sales brochures manuals, prints, etc. The best environment: moderate temperature, relative humidity and good air circulation. Do not store your treasured paper in the attic or the basement or near water sources (like your washing machine, water heater or bathroom). Also avoid storage near heat sources, direct sunlight or bright light of any kind.

Throwing your favorite sales brochure or book on the nearest window sill or radiator is not a good idea! If you want to save a noteworthy newspaper clipping, have it photocopied onto buffered paper—the copy will last a lot longer than the original. Store that original unfolded, in a buffered folder. Do not use the regular manila folders that you find at office supply stores. They are a source of acids, which will lead to the item deteriorating. If you can't find buffered folders use a sheet of buffered paper at the front and back of the folder.

Keep in mind that the terms “archival quality” and “acid-free” can be misleading. Archival quality enclosures will not damage their contents

chemically, will resist deterioration and provide physical support. Preservation items for use in the home are low in lignin and buffered throughout. There are some photographs, drawings or blueprints that may be damaged by chemicals used as buffers. These should be stored in unbuffered, low-lignin paper enclosures. If using plastic enclosures, make sure they are either polyethylene or polypropylene, just as long as they don't contain plasticizers. Preservation-grade polyester, such as Mylar-D is excellent.

There are several companies that supply preservation products. Compare catalogs to make sure you find what you need at the best price. As always, questions and advice on preserving your paper should be directed to a professional conservator.

Books, Part 1: We've covered preservation of your sales literature and manuals, which is closely related to preserving your books. As you can imagine, I believe you can never have too many books and keeping them preserved for future generations is something we can all do.

A lot of what was discussed in preserving literature and manuals also apply to books. Light, temperature and humidity are the big three in book preservation. If at all possible, try to avoid exposing your books to excessive amounts of light, especially daylight and fluorescent light. Be aware of the daylight coming in through your windows and shining right on your bookshelves. If this is a problem, you may want to find some way to block the light. As with your photographs and literature, avoid storing your books in the attic or basement or any environment where there are changes or extremes in temperature. This includes storage near fireplaces or other heat sources. An ideal temperature in your "library" would be 70° F and the relative humidity should be 50% (so don't make the bathroom your library).

When shelving your books, they should be squarely upright and supported by neighboring books or stable bookends. Books that are stored on an angle (holding up your other books) will become deformed from the stress on the spine and joints. Do not pack your books tightly together. They could be damaged when trying to remove one. Large, coffee-table type books should be stored horizontally, no more than two or three high.

When handling your books, do so with clean hands. Most of the dirt that accumulates on books comes from oily fingerprints. You may not see the dirt at first, but it will become visible in time. It is also a good idea to use only paper bookmarks. Leather or metal bookmarks may tear or stain the pages. Do not use paper lips or sticky notes to mark the pages, either, and do not store newspaper clippings or other materials in your books. Storing other items in your books puts stress on the book's structure and

can stain the pages. I know we all do it, but try not to eat or drink around your books.

Regular cleaning of your book collections should be done to remove accumulations of dust and dirt (and in my house – collie hair). When dusting your books, wipe away from the spine towards the fore edge. Dusting towards the spine knocks the dirt down the spine where it is trapped.

If you use a vacuum to remove the dirt and dust from your books, place cheesecloth or soft screening over the nozzle to help reduce the suction and catch any loose bits that might become dislodged.

If you have leather-bound books, it is best to contact a conservator for help in their preservation. The same goes for books with damage such as loose signatures, broken spines, loose or torn pages. Do not use adhesive tape to repair your books – that will just cause further damage.

If your books get wet, they need to be stabilized as quickly as possible. Mold growth is pretty much a given if the temperature is above 70° and humidity above 60% for more than 48 hours. Wrap books individually in paper, pack them spine down in a waterproof container or cardboard box lined with plastic and freeze them. The books can be thawed and dried at a later time.

Books may be air-dried by standing them up, with the pages fanned open. Use fans to help circulate the air and a dehumidifier to reduce humidity. When the books are dry, place them flat with a weight on top to minimize warping. There may be some residual staining and distortion. Stored correctly and handled with care, your books will last a long time.

REMOVING FASTENERS FROM YOUR LITERATURE: It probably seemed like a good idea at the time – “I’ll just staple/paper clip this stuff together until I can get to it.” Months (years) pass – oops, the staple/paper clip has rusted. Now what?

We don’t give much thought to it, but when we use fasteners such as paper clips or staples, we are damaging the very item that we are trying to preserve. Fasteners may cause physical damage such as tears or creases or chemical damage such as rust. If at all possible, fasteners should be removed before the item is placed in storage. If removing the fastener will further damage the item, leave it in place.

To remove a paper clip that has not rusted (and which is on sturdy paper) place the item so the long side of the clip is on a flat surface. Hold the long side down (through the paper) with one finger and gently pry up the

short side of the clip. You can use your thumbnail or a small flat tool to get under the clip. If the clip has rusted or the paper is fragile, insert a piece of Mylar between the clip and the paper on both sides and then pry the clip open.

To remove staples, **forget the staple remover!** If the staple is not rusted, gently pry open the prongs and slip through the punched holes. Again, a flat tool such as a microspatula (available from conservation suppliers) works best. For fragile pages or ones in which the staples have rusted, use a small piece of Mylar inserted between the staple and the paper on both sides and pry open carefully.

STORING OVERSIZED LITERATURE: How many times have you wished that all the literature for your car was the same size? I know we have often expressed that wish here in the library. Maps, posters, oversized prints and literature all create a storage problem, not just for libraries and museums, but also for the private collector. If they are not stored properly, damage can easily occur. In an ideal world, you would have large flat-files or archival boxes. But, given space and cost considerations, most of us cannot afford that luxury.

Usually, any object larger than 15 x 9" should be stored flat. If the item is smaller than 30 x 40", it may be stored in an archival box, which is less expensive than a flat file. Ideally, the boxes should be lidded, buffered and lignin-free stock and should be somewhat larger than the time being stored. If you are storing more than one item in a folder, the items should be interleaved with a chemically stable paper. Do not overload the folder. Items should be able to be retrieved without any damage. If the item is fragile or brittle, it is recommended to use a sturdier material, such as 4-ply archival board. Folders should be stored flat. Label the folders with a pencil or water-proof ink. Self-adhesive labels are not a good idea, as the adhesive could migrate into the folder.

If your item is an object that is handled frequently, you may want to consider encapsulation in a clear flexible inert polyester film. The item is sandwiched between two pieces of film slightly larger than the object. If the item is acidic, do not encapsulate. Acidic objects will deteriorate faster in a closed environment.

For really large items, rolling around a tube is a common solution. This isn't really an ideal storage solution, but often is the only practical one. It is recommended to roll oversized materials around the outside of a lignin-free tube at least four inches in diameter. The tube should also be long enough to extend beyond the material by at least two inches at each end. Rolling of items is best for material that is flexible enough to withstand

unrolling and rerolling and items that are seldom consulted. The item should be rolled facing inward, to protect it from light exposure. If possible, after rolling, the item should be wrapped in archival quality paper or polyester film to protect it from dust and abrasion. Tubes should be stored horizontally.”

When you have questions it is best to contact a professional conservator. *Editor's note* - Sources include the local library, museum, state museums and historical societies.

Additional Input

Jim Burns, President of the FASNY Museum of Firefighting in Hudson New York, has also sent me an email with this advice: “I read your article on three things that can damage periodicals. Add three more, handling without cotton gloves as oil in skin can damage documents. Secondly, we need to add temperature control to building whenever we get it, as the variables in temps can damage documents. It has to be moisture controlled. And the third thing is lighting. Florescent lighting can bleed documents and other printed documents. They also should be kept away from direct sunlight.

I am not an expert on these topics, but I am learning as President of the NYS Fire Museum. Our director is very patiently trying to teach us FF's how to protect our valuable collection. Oh, one other thing, bound books should be shelved or in boxes flat not standing. We have quite a few older house logs and we keep them in a climate controlled environment and also stored flat with storage wrapping, not sure what it is.”

Poor Richards Almanack

And the winner was – oh, before I tell you the name of the winner, I should give you the answer. The answer was Richard Saunders. That was Franklin's nom de plume. According to Board Member Bill Killen Franklin wrote more than 500 proverbs (sayings) between 1734 and 1747. He also penned several articles under the name of Silence Dogood.

The first person I heard from was Todd Hays Assistant Fire Marshal from the Enid Fire Department. He added to Bill Killen's' definition by identifying that Silence Dogood was a prudish widow. I also heard from Paul Martin from Albany New York, and Traci Napier Reece from Georgia. As a result, I capriciously have awarded them first, second, third and fourth prize and I am sending them a package in the mail which I hope brings a smile to their faces.

On-Site Storage

We have had several requests from parties wanting to donate items today that we have been unable to work with because we don't have the building yet. Chip Jewell, however, has talked to the owners of the new Ambulance Building and we may get permission shortly to store some archival materials in their empty space. This can go a long way towards encouraging contributions to the museum that would allow us to start the archiving process fairly soon. Those of you out there who hear about libraries being destroyed should feel free to communicate to us so we can afford some of the calamities of the past. There will be more detail to follow on this in an upcoming newsletter.

How Good is Your Latin?

We are big in the fire service on mottos and acronyms. I am collecting them all the time and I am preserving them in my history files. Recently, I attended the Woodland Community College Firefighter 1 Academy Graduation Ceremony. Their class motto was "Ex Fuma In Flamma Lunctus".

I only got four responses to Ben Franklin's question. I will award a prize to the first three people who provide me with the translation of that term.

Summary

We are making progress. Every day my email continues expanding from parties who are finding out what we are up to. Please feel free to continue to encourage charter membership in our organization (for example, there is an application at

the back of this newsletter). For those that will be at FRI, I look forward to having a chance to talk to you on a one-to-one basis. I know Bill Killen will be there because he is a member of the IAFC's "over the hill gang" – excuse me I meant to say Past Presidents. If you see me at FRI, don't hesitate to flag me down.

Also, if any of you feel there is any information that we should be including in our newsletter, please don't hesitate to forward it to me. Recently I was given a copy of the Hallmark information of all of the badge manufacturers that I will be printing in an upcoming newsletter. That came about by a member merely sending me a photocopy of it.

As always, suggestions are encouraged.

Ronny J. Coleman
President, National Fire Heritage Center



National Fire Heritage Center Application Form

Name:

Mailing Address:

Please do not use PO Boxes unless absolutely necessary. Some postal delivery systems will not deliver packages to these boxes.

City:

State:

Zip:

Country:

Phone:

Cell Phone:

Email Address:

Background, Resume or Experience in Field:

What area of interest do you have with regard to this topic:

- General Membership
- Committee Membership:
- Organizational Leadership