

NC ECHO
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Time capsules in the North Carolina Room, Caldwell County Public Library Lenoir, NC



A time capsule on the grounds of the Norris Public Library Rutherfordton, NC

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Newsletter

From the Project Archivist/Coordinator

All of a sudden NC ECHO has been inundated with questions about time capsules! Several partner institutions want to create one. Others want to know what to do with the one they have. Yet another has a connection with one that is due to be opened soon and cannot be located! From where did this seemingly random yet growing interest in time capsules arise? Presently, that is a mystery, but answers to time capsule questions do not have to be.

Time capsules, like scrapbooks, can be an archivist's or curator's nightmare, but they are just as often a researcher's and your public's dream come true. Let's face it—people love looking at old stuff and the more diverse and the more they can relate the stuff to their own lives, the better. What, then, can top a time capsule chock full of old everyday material culture and documents?

So you are faced with the reality of a time capsule—either you have one in your collection or you are charged with making one. In either situation, you face major preservation issues. These issues are easily addressed at the time of creation. Several basic ground rules apply:

1. Create your time capsule for a stated reason. Convey a message to the future, commemorate an event, etc....
2. Include items made from materials that will stand the test of time.
3. Make sure the physical make-up of your capsule container will stand the test of time in the location you choose to place it.
4. Document your time capsule and its location in a way that will be accessible through time to those for whom the capsule is being made.
5. Lastly, inform the International Time Capsule Society (ITCS) at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, GA

http://www.oglethorpe.edu/about_us/crypt_of_civilization/international_time_capsule_society.asp

The ITCS maintains a database of all known time capsules! By informing them of the existence of your time capsule, you register it with their database, thus adding a significant layer of background documentation. The ITCS also provides great tips on time capsule creation and handling, a newsletter, fantastic stories on time capsule his-

tory —“The Nine Most Wanted Time Capsules”—and they operate an e-mail discussion list you can join!

There are quite a number of sources



Dr. Gary Moore with the FFA Museum's huge time capsule, White Lake, NC

addressing the challenges inherent in time capsules. Whether you are planning to assemble a time capsule, maintaining one in your repository, or looking for a time capsule you cannot find, turn to the ITCS and also to the following for guidance:

Florida Department of State, Bureau of Archives and Records Management
<http://dliis.dos.state.fl.us/barm/preservation/conservation/time/>

Art Conservation Center at the University of Denver
<http://www.rap-arcc.org/leaflets/accd1.pdf>

Time capsules can be an interesting and crowd-pleasing way to capture a moment in history, and NC ECHO welcomes our readers' comments and suggestions about them.

Kim Cumber

“Describing Archives: A Content Standard provides for a great deal of flexibility in its application.....it also provides a framework to encourage better archival description.”

Kathy Wisser,
NC ECHO
Metadata Coordinator



Jackie Dean, NC ECHO Project Librarian

School for Scanning

Jackie Dean recently returned to the NC ECHO office from the Northeast Document Conservation Center's School for Scanning held June 1-3, 2005, in Boston, MA, enlightened and energized to investigate digital preservation solutions for NC ECHO and our partner institutions among other initiatives.

Metadata Matters

It's been a busy spring in the metadata world!

The subcommittee of the Standards Working Group for NCEAD that reviews the *Best Practice Guidelines* has completed its revisions for the second edition. This document was circulated to the Standards Working Group email list for comment and will be launched on the NCEAD website in a few weeks. The *Best Practice Guidelines* include references to *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* to ensure that NCEAD is fully compliant with the content standard approved by the Society of American Archivists.

In anticipation of this, I wanted to include a brief description of the role that DACS can play in creating robust description of materials as well as an introduction to the new standard for the NC ECHO community.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

In the history of archives, descriptive standards have traveled a rocky road. There were no widely accepted descriptive standards prior to the publication of *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts* (APPM) by Steven L. Hensen in 1983. Hensen harnessed the use of the Machine-readable Cataloging (MARC) standard and provided guidelines for describing archives in library catalogs. APPM was adapted by many institutions for general descriptive standards, but was written

primarily with MARC in mind. Its layout mimicked *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules*, the standard for bibliographic cataloging, which it was meant to enhance due to AACR's insufficient treatment of archival description. APPM served as an acceptable archival description standard for MARC and went through two editions. In the 1990s, technology and archival description merged in the form of Encoded Archival Description (EAD). With the widespread adoption of EAD, archivists began calling for a content standard that would serve both the EAD and MARC communities. Initial efforts included collaborating with Canada in the CUSTARD project (Canadian-U.S. Task Force on Archival Description), until fundamental difference in theoretical stances for

archives forced a rethinking about the collaboration. The U.S. branch of CUSTARD sustained the effort to create a content standard and published DACS in 2004.

There are several strengths to DACS as a content standard. First, DACS is consciously based upon ISAD(G), the International Standard for Archival Description (General) While ISAD(G) requires 25 elements and DACS requires 24, the foundation is well-suited to demonstrate the robustness of the standard. Second, DACS is "output-neutral." Examples in DACS include MARC and EAD coding, but DACS does not cater to any one structure standard. This allows for the application of DACS across many different structure standards, including finding aids in analog format as well as the most sophisticated technological ways to express archival description. Third, DACS presents a standard for archival description that provides a broad range of applications. The standard does this through two different mechanisms: it provides guidance on creating either single-level or multi-level description and on minimum, optimum, and added value applications. Finally, DACS lays out eight principles that underwrite the content standard. These principles are firmly grounded in archival theory as expressed over the past century. It is this connection to archival theory that promises to sustain DACS over the long term.

DACS provides for a great deal of flexibility in its application. This can be seen in the tripartite explanation of minimum, optimum, and added value. But it also provides a framework to encourage better archival description. For instance, the minimum single-level requirements include nine elements that provide descriptive as well as administrative functions. These include such things as title, date, extent, creator, language and access information as well as identification code and repository information. It is clear that the architects of DACS have considered carefully the minimum components of description that should be a part of archival description. These requirements are common sense, although they have traditionally been neglected in one way or another.

After introductory materials, DACS is

organized according to elements of description. Where appropriate, "commentary" sections have been added to provide context for the elements and insight into the decision-making process that took place to create the standard. Additionally, appendices include full record examples for EAD and MARC, crosswalks from APPM, ISAD(G), EAD and MARC, and companion standards. The standard also includes the comprehensive glossary that helps in the navigation of the terminology used throughout the element discussions.

Perhaps the single most important and lasting aspects to DACS is its reliance on professional judgment and local policies to inform individual applications of the standard: "The rules recognize the necessity for judgment and interpretation on the part of both the person who prepares the description and the institution responsible for it. Such judgment and interpretation may be based on the requirements of a particular description, on the use of the material being described, or on the descriptive system being used." (DACS, p. 4) The rules themselves include language such as "if appropriate" and "if important" to provide the flexibility for individual institutions to establish the best description policy for their materials and their users. These statements constitute an acknowledgement that institutional differences exist and that archivists and cultural heritage professionals understand their own collections. Cultural heritage materials reflect the messy world of human experience and standards that rely on those that know them best to provide judgment rather than dictating content will provide resilient description information for the future.

DACS can be purchased from the Society of American Archivists (<http://www.archivists.org>) and is strongly recommended for partner institutions that are dealing with archival materials. It may also provide some insight for other institutions as they grapple with the description of their materials. Please be sure to email me if you have any questions regarding DACS.

Metadata issues, questions, comments, NEEDS? Contact me at: katherine.wisser@duke.edu.

Spotlight

Historic Fontana Village Fontana Dam, NC (Graham County)

Historic Fontana Village Resort is located in the unspoiled, secluded Nantahala Forest of western North Carolina and borders the southern edge of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Although this vacation destination is renowned for its natural beauty and its proximity to the Appalachian Trail, the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest, and the infamous motorcycle paradise that is the Tail of the Dragon at Deals Gap, Fontana Village is also known (though far less well) for its unique history and its preservation of that history.

Historic Fontana Village seeks to preserve and exhibit the many historic structures on the site—both those from before the establishment of the village such as the 1875 Gunter Cabin and those of the WWII-era village—and to

interpret the history of the Fontana Dam area.

Fontana Village arose during World War II. The need for aluminum was great at that time, and in the production of aluminum, electricity is needed in large amounts. Fontana Dam was built by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) to help generate that electricity. The village was created to house the five thousand workers and their families who constructed the dam between 1942 and 1944. Many of the workers left after the war ended, and a resort was created from the village.

Not only is the history of this village and its inhabitants important, many of the buildings of the village are historically significant as well.

It was here that the “A-6” prefabricated house— forerunner to the modern mobile home and invented by TVA chief architect Roland Wank and world-

renowned architect Albert Kahn—was first widely used. Most structures of this type have not survived, but at Fontana Village, several of the A-6 houses not only survive but are in great condition and have until recently been inhabited! Preservation work on these is presently being planned.

The history of the area from before the Gunter Cabin was built through the resort years is eloquently related by Historic Fontana Village Special Projects Manager Lance Holland in his book *Fontana: A Pocket History of Appalachia*. Read the book and discover a unique American story; visit Historic Fontana Village and experience it!

Historic Fontana Village
www.fontanavillage.com
(800) 489-2258
Hwy 28 North, PO Box 68
Fontana Dam, NC 28733

Kim Cumber
NC ECHO Project Archivist

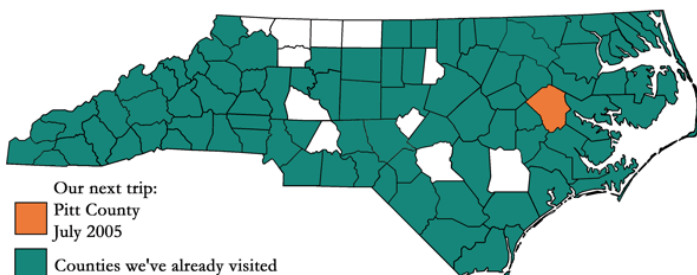


Lance Holland, Historic Fontana Village Special Projects Manager, beside the Jessie Cornwell Gunter Cabin built on this site in 1875



One of the A-6 prefabricated homes erected at Fontana Village in 1942 to house workers. These were the earliest forerunners of the modern mobile home

The Survey



Buncombe, Cherokee, Clay, and Graham Counties welcomed NC ECHO Project Archivist Kim Cumber and Project Librarian Jackie Dean as they conducted the NC ECHO survey and visited cultural heritage organizations

in the western part of the state late April and May following the highly successful and productive NC ECHO/NCCAT Horace Kephart Digitization Seminar at the NC Center for the Advancement of Teaching in Cullowhee.

Only twelve counties remain to be surveyed—

- Alleghany (August)
- Cumberland (October)
- Duplin (November)
- Durham (November)
- Lee (December)
- Pitt (July)
- Rockingham (August)
- Rowan (September-October)
- Stanly (August)
- Stokes (August)
- Surry (August)
- Yadkin (September)

Thank you to the wonderful organizations all over the state who have been such kind hosts since 2001 to Kim and Jackie and the other survey staff. NC ECHO looks forward to sharing the compiled results of the survey in 2006!

Mark Your Calendars

June 15-17, 2005
Introduction to NCEAD
Workshop, UNC-Wilmington

June 20-26, 2005
ALA Conference,
Chicago, IL

June 29-July 1, 2005
Introduction to NCEAD
Workshop, UNC-Charlotte

August 15-22, 2005
SAA Conference, New
Orleans, LA

September 12-16, 2005
Digitization Institute VIII
State Library, Raleigh

September 20-23, 2005
NCLA Conference
Winston-Salem

October 6-7, 2005
SNCA Meeting, Wilmington

October 10-14, 2005
Archives Week in NC!

[http://www.ncarchivists.org/
archives_week/](http://www.ncarchivists.org/archives_week/)

North Carolina ECHO, *Exploring Cultural Heritage Online*, is the World Wide Web's doorway to the special collections of North Carolina's libraries, archives, museums, and historic sites. Supported with federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds made possible through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources, this innovative project seeks to build a state-wide framework for digitization in order to facilitate comprehensive access to the holdings of North Carolina's cultural institutions.

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www.ncecho.org

NC ECHO Project Vision – All of North Carolina's cultural institutions work together to make the state's unique cultural and historical resources accessible for the education and enjoyment of people of all ages in the state, the nation, and the world.

NC ECHO Project Purpose – The NC ECHO portal provides a single point of entry for the citizens of North Carolina to the unique resources of North Carolina's cultural institutions in order to enhance education and learning.

Criteria for Inclusion in the NC ECHO project – Any cultural institution (library, archive, museum, historic site, or organization), which maintains a permanent, non-living collection of unique materials held for research and/or exhibit purposes and open for the use of the public will be surveyed. Denominational/associational collections will be surveyed, but individual church collections will not. Art museums will be surveyed but galleries will not. Zoos, arboreta, and parks will not be surveyed unless as a part of their mission they hold collections as described above.

Through a comprehensive needs assessment and opinion survey, site visits, consultations, workshops, and grant programs, NC ECHO encourages cooperation and collaboration among differing types of cultural institutions and among institutions of varying levels of technological and professional expertise. It is NC ECHO's belief that by working together North Carolina's cultural institutions can achieve greater successes and can do more good than they can by working alone.

NC ECHO Advisory Committee

Members

Robert Busko, Director, Scotland County Memorial Library

Robert Byrd, Director, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University Libraries

Kevin Cherry, Visiting Lecturer, College of Education, Joyner Library, East Carolina University

Steve Hensen, Director, Planning and Project Development, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University

Lynn Holdzkom, Assistant Curator, Head of Technical Services, Wilson Library, UNC-CH

Martha Battle Jackson, Registrar, North Carolina State Historic Sites, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

Hal Keiner, University Archivist, Appalachian State University

Dick Lankford, State Archivist, Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

Druscie Simpson, Head of Information Technology, Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

David A. Smith, Media/Tech Coordinator, North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching

Gerry Solomon, Assistant Section Chief, Evaluation Services, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Helen Wykle, Special Collections Librarian, D. H. Ramsey Library, University of North Carolina – Asheville

State Library Staff Members

Jeanne Crisp, Head of Library Development, State Library of North Carolina

Grant Pair, Assistant State Librarian for Information Technologies, State Library of North Carolina



Lynn Holdzkom
Assistant Curator and Head of Technical Services
Wilson Library, UNC-CH
Photo taken by Rachel Canada