

Archivists

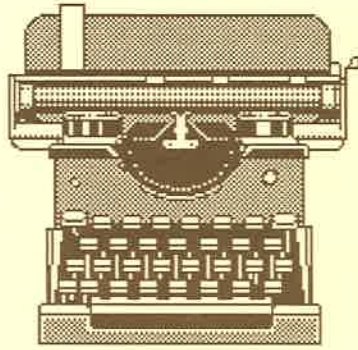
Summer 1991

Published by the Tennessee Archivists



Home of J. C. Murphy and location of the First General Assembly of the Church of God (Cleveland, TN). The leaders of the meeting, W. F. Bryant (left) and R. G. Spurling, Jr., (right), are standing in front of the building, a structure which still stands in Cherokee, NC.

ARCHIVISTS Editorial



I sit here in my office on this hot July afternoon staring at a blank sheet of paper, waiting for the words to come. Any words. I 'm not picky. Something, anything, that will give you encouragement and help you through the hard times that we all are facing. You know the litany as well as I do. Nine people gone from the Tennessee State Library and Archives, with more layoffs rumored. The Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped gone. Layoffs across the state at all levels, in all areas. Travel money slashed, supply money slashed, support staff slashed, conservation projects delayed. The list goes on and on.

I could rant and rave against the powers that be, I suppose, but beating my head against a brick wall has long since lost what little appeal it ever held for me. Tennessee is just one state in financial difficulties in a nation in financial difficulty. In the overall scheme of things, the voices of a few outraged archivists just don't register in ears already deafened by the roars of outraged educators, parents, taxpayers and special interest groups. In the immortal words of Kipling, "We are small potatoes and few to the hill."

So, given the state of affairs, what can we do?

We can start by doing what archivists do best. Survive. We hunker down and hold on. We have never had much, so it may be that we can weather this storm better than organizations used to more favorable conditions.

We can expect further losses before things get better. We may lose some individual members, we may even lose some archives, but the profession will survive.

I know. Most of you are thinking, "This is supposed to cheer us up?" I never said anything about cheering you up. I said "help you through the hard times."

The situation isn't very cheerful, even with the rosiest of rose-tinted glasses. The best we can hope for is survival, followed by years of playing "catch-up," trying to repair the damage. It is, admittedly, a pretty grim picture.

So, what can we do about it?

Not much for now. What we can do is see to it that we are never this vulnerable again. We can organize. We can unite with other history-related professions and lobby for change. We can take a page from our sister states: Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia have already united all their historical agencies under one division of state government. These departments of archives and history streamline the operations of all agencies involved, cut duplication of services and provide better control of historical resources. All of which saves money.

Additionally, such a department within state government provides professional organizations such as Tennessee Archivists with an ally in the halls of power and assures that historical issues and concerns will be given a fair hearing. Also, it is much harder to ignore the needs and concerns of one large agency than those of many small ones.

More importantly, it is the right thing to do. Tennessee

has a great history. It is presently being piddled away because of the confusion of agencies trying to preserve it. Quite literally, it seems at times that the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing.

The second thing we can do is exercise our rights as free citizens. We can examine the candidates' records on historical issues, we can campaign, we can vote and we can lobby. If we have learned nothing else from our present hardships, we should remember that enlightened self interest is no bad thing. If we don't look out for ourselves, nobody else is going to. We must overcome our historical objectivity and get involved. Elected officials can be influenced. Sometimes the righteousness of the cause influences them, sometimes what will get them re-elected. Whichever path we take, we must be sure that the next time there is a budget crisis, those with the "say so" know what archives are and that it would be wise to deal as gently with them as circumstances permit.



From the President



Those of you who could not make it to the spring meeting in Memphis missed a pleasant, though small, gathering. I learned all kinds of interesting things about our friends in the western part of the state, the Catherine the Great exhibit was well-worth seeing, and we almost broke even, according to David's final figures.

As I announced in the business meeting, and as we so accepted, State Librarian and Archivist Ed Gleaves has volunteered the State Library and Archives as host for the fall meeting, to be coincident with the open forum on manuscripts and historical records in Tennessee. In order to accommodate this timing, the meeting is currently set for November 13 - 15, 1991, beginning at 1:00 on Wednesday, Nov. 13, and ending at noon on Friday, Nov. 15. The forum will take place on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning and will be in lieu of the preconference workshops that we have been scheduling. I hope this meets with everyone's approval.

I can report progress from the Nominating Committee (John Thweatt, Joel Stowers, Ned Irwin, Chair), whose slate of nominees is as follows:

Vice-president/President-elect: Dr. Barbara Flannery, Shelby County Archives, Memphis


Secretary: Clara Swann, Chattanooga

Treasurer: David McWhirter, Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville.

We owe a vote of thanks to the committee for producing such a slate and to the nominees for agreeing to serve.

Carol Roberts and I attended a planning meeting in Birmingham in May, with SAC representatives from Alabama and Mississippi, to work on the program for the SAC meeting in Nashville next year. The meeting is set for May 13 - 15, 1992, with a preconference workshop on Wednesday, Aug. 13, and sessions on Thursday, Aug. 14., and on Friday morning, Aug. 15,

which follows the structure that was used in Lake Guntersville last year. We are presently in the process of soliciting presenters for the various sessions that we tentatively set up and are to have the information to Rickey Best of the University of Alabama—Montgomery, who is responsible for the program, by August 1. It looks like a good meeting so far, and Bill Sumners' Local Arrangements Committee is hard at work. I have sent an invitation to our colleagues in Kentucky to join us and will be curious to see how the registration goes. My guess is that this will be the largest SAC meeting so far.

James Lloyd, President 

Preconference Workshop Report

By MARVIN DOWNING

The preconference workshop for the spring meeting covered the Archives Control System software program, ARCS. Brother Robert Werle of Christian Brothers University both informed and entertained those who attended, while Chris Langford answered technical questions that arose. Brother Robert demonstrated the versatility of the system, which he regards as less complicated than the MARC format and, certainly, less expensive (\$495 versus \$5,000). The system allows for printing on regular size paper and, also, library catalog cards. Search features are built into the system and software contains a control/security feature which specifies the nature and amount of access each user has to the archival information.

Barbara Flannery of Memphis and Shelby County Archives, a member of the Preconference Program Committee, has already looked seriously into the possibility of purchasing the software and suggested that a main entry previously called "biography sheet" be changed to "content sheet." It was also discovered during the workshop, as a result of a question from David McWhirter and Flannery, that more than one file can not be used with ARCS. However, Chris Langford is working on the solution to that problem.

The Preconference Program Committee appreciates the local arrangements made by Michele Fagan and Jane Williamson for the preconference workshop.

Spring Meeting Report

By MICHELE FAGAN

The Tennessee Archivists Spring Meeting, May 9 – 10, convened in Memphis at the Holiday Inn – Overton Square. This is the first time in a number of years that the conference was held in Memphis.

The first session, "What Every Editor Knows," featured two history professors, Dr. Marius Carriere, chairman of the Christian Brothers University History Department, and Dr. Berkley Kalin, Memphis State University. Both men have edited the West Tennessee Historical Society Papers and written and published numerous journal articles. Dr. Carriere discussed how an editor finds and evaluates material. Dr. Kalin touched upon the philosophical aspects of writing for publication. Both men concluded that hopeful authors need to study the journals to decide which one would be most appropriate and then write the piece.

After a short break, John Thweatt, Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSL&A), reported on the NHPRC Needs Assessment Report Project, encouraging archivists in Tennessee to become involved in the statewide activity.

During the business meeting in the late afternoon, Jim Lloyd, UT–Knoxville president, announced that Dr. Ed Gleaves, TSL&A, had offered to host the fall TA meeting with the NHPRC Needs Assessment Report as the preconference workshop, Nov. 13–15.

Bill Sumners of the SBC Historical Commission outlined the upcoming SAC meeting, which will also meet in Nashville, May 13–15, 1992. Carol Roberts, documents conservator with TSL&A, will be the program coordinator, while the archivists at Vanderbilt will arrange for tours around Nashville.

The Friday morning sessions began with a presentation by Dr. Jim Johnson of the Memphis and Shelby County Public Library and Information Service (MSCPLIS) titled "Local History Collections in a Public Library." Johnson heads the MSCPLIS's History Department, which contains the Memphis and Shelby County Room. He discussed the patrons and procedures of this area and showed a video which MSCPLIS has produced to introduce high school students to the types of historical resources available there.

In the last session, Carol Roberts gave "Basic Conservation Techniques" for archivists in small departments without access to sophisticated equipment and for others interested in preserving their own papers and photos. This session, as well as others, drew several Memphian non-members to the conference.

For Thursday night's entertainment, the Local Arrangements Committee secured a block of tickets to the Catherine the Great Exhibit "Treasures of Imperial Russia" at the Memphis Cook Convention Center. The TA members saw eighteenth-century furniture, paintings, clothing and objet d'art from Leningrad's Hermitage Museum.



Tennessee Archivists Spring Meeting, May 9–10, 1991

Financial Report

Registrations received	\$1137.00
Paid out	
Catherine the Great Exhibit	196.25
Postage and Publicity	177.94
Holiday Inn	
(Meeting Room and Refreshments)	624.04
Gratuity for servers	15.00
Parking refunds	21.00
Refunds for those unable to attend	155.00
Total expenses	\$1189.23
Net deficit	\$52.23

Spotlight on ...

Hal Bernard Dixon Jr. Pentacostal Research Center

- Address:** 260 11th Street, Cleveland, TN 37311
Telephone: (615) 478-7761
- Parking:** Free parking available on site.
- Access:** The Dixon Center's summer hours are 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Fall, Winter and Spring hours are lengthened until 10:00 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- Restrictions:** There are no restrictions on the majority of the materials in the Dixon Center.
- Copy Facilities:** A copy machine is available in the center. Copies are 10¢ per page.
- Major Subjects:** The bulk of the holdings concentrate on the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) and the International Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement.
- Holdings:** The Dixon Center contains more than 760 linear feet of materials, including institutional records, personal manuscripts, pamphlets, and photographs, and extensive audio and video collections. A special book collection of more than 7500 volumes about the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement is a major focus of the center.
- Accession Policy:** The Dixon Center accepts materials related to the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) or other Pentecostal-Charismatic ministries which have no other appropriate repository.
- Director:** Joseph Byrd, Ph.D., director and assistant professor at the Church of God School of Theology

Since the late 1970's, widespread interest in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movement among researchers has resulted in the creation of several research collections and archives. The Hal Bernard Dixon Jr. Pentecostal Research Center is one of seven major research institutions in the United States dedicated to preserving and documenting the life of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement.

The Dixon Center is unique among similar institutions in that it combines the aspects of a research center's special book collection and the archives of a religious institution. Members of the Church of God had a desire to preserve the heritage of the denomination, which is thought to be the oldest continuing Pentecostal church (originating in 1896). The center began as a special collection on Pentecostalism at the the Lee College library in 1970. Modern facilities were constructed when the 1980 General

Assembly of the Church of God authorized building a resource center to house the Pentecostal Research Center and the libraries of the denomination's seminary and liberal arts college. The new building was completed and occupied in 1985.

The center collects and makes available for research records and materials that show the origin, history and development of the Church of God and its ministries and the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement. The materials are gathered for the use of scholars, researchers and writers. Patrons include researchers, graduate students, faculty from Lee College and the Church of God School of Theology, undergraduate students, the general church and the Cleveland-Bradley County community.

The center strives to collect Church of God and Pentecostal-Charismatic material from around the world in all available languages. The scope of the

collection's contents include data on the theological basis of the Movement as it related to biblical and systematic theology.



The archives has three basic sections: institutional records of the church, personal manuscripts of significant ministers and laity associated with the Church of God, and an oral history collection. If a Pentecostal-Charismatic leader has no appropriate repository for personal papers or institutional records, the Dixon Center will preserve that collection.

Institutional records of various media formats are categorized "intellectually," through finding aids, not by physical separation. The center does not attempt to collect the records of individual churches. However, it does collect those records of churches which are inactive. Institutional records are identified and located in an inventory and a finding aid detailed to

container listing. A project in the planning stages is the creation of a record retention schedule for the entire denomination to facilitate an orderly transfer of records to the archives.

Personal manuscripts are solicited and collected from ministers of the Church of God, spouses of ministers, significant laity and other leaders (i.e. administrators, educators, etc.). They include journals, diaries, personal papers, correspondence, significant personal articles, and other papers which document the life and ministry of persons associated with the Church of God. These records are identified in an inventory, described in a finding aid including container listing, and recorded in a donor list along with a gift agreement form.

In 1990 the center launched an *oral history* project in which significant personalities of the Church of God have been interviewed on videotape. The individuals are asked to recount their own spiritual pilgrimage, their work in and relating to the Church of God, and their recollections of the Church of God in their lifetime.

Approximately 60 video-taped interviews have been completed. As the collection grows, the need to transcribe the interviews and reproduce the transcriptions on acid-free paper is evident. At present only the videotape records are maintained, inventories and indexed by subjects and names mentioned in the interviews.

The *book collection* of the Dixon Center is a non-circulating collection divided into two sections: the "Church of God Collection (noted on call numbers with the preface 'Church')," and the "Pentecostal-Charismatic Collection (call numbers prefaced 'Pent')." The Church of God Collection consists of those works relating to the Church of God or written by Church of God authors. The Pentecostal-Charismatic Collections consists of those works written about the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement from all points of view by authors who are not Church of God.



The general subject boundaries for the collection are Pentecostalism, Pentecostal Movement, Charismatic Movement, Latter Rain Movement, Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Glossolalia, Xenolalia, Spiritual Gifts, Pneumatology, and other

topics related to Pentecostalism, in addition to works written by Church of God authors and works written about the Church of God. These subjects are collected at the research intensity level.

The special collection includes monographs, periodicals, information files, pamphlets, newspaper clippings, programs, brochures, tracts, manuscripts, unpublished papers, and non-book media such as audio cassette tapes, video cassette tapes, microforms, records, filmstrips, etc.

All applicable languages are collected. However, the following priorities are used: English, Spanish, Romance languages, Germanic languages and other languages.



ARCHIVISTS CONSERVATION CORNER

— THE —

Storage & Preservation of Recordings



By BRUCE NEMEROV,
The Center for Popular Music,
Middle Tennessee State University

Rare is the archivist today who is not burdened with the task of preserving and storing a bewildering array of recorded media. In the last fifty years, various types of discs and tapes have enjoyed ever-increasing popularity as documents of our music, oral history and language. Following are guidelines for preserving these items.

Recordings break down into two groups: electro-mechanical and magnetic. An electro-mechanical recording is essentially an engraving which can appear in a variety of materials, shapes and sizes. A magnetic recording is a variable magnetic field imposed along a length of metal-coated plastic tape or steel wire. Both electro-mechanical and magnetic recordings store best in an environment of approximately 65° F at 45% relative humidity.

Twentieth century electro-mechanical sound recordings are most often in disc form. They should be stored on edge, vertically on steel shelving, in acid-free paper sleeves. Cylindrical recordings — most date from the turn of the century or before — should be stored on end in an acid-free cardboard box. The earliest cylinders were actually made of wax and benefit from a reduced storage temperature (45° F).

A special type of electro-mechanical recording is the instantaneous disc or "acetate." A laminate, this disc is made of a thin coating of nitrate-based plastic — a chemically unstable form — sputtered onto both sides of a glass, aluminum or paper base. As it ages the coating tends to dry, shrink, crack and separate from the base. Instantaneous discs, because of their use as home recordings, contain much unique information and should be gently cleansed (distilled water only, applied with a soft, lint-free cloth) and stored, if in good condition, as are other discs. If the "acetate" is already cracked or flaking, it is safest to store it uncleaned, in a fully supported horizontal position. Having the proper playback equipment and know-how, the archivist should make a preservation (tape) copy of all instantaneous disks in the collection.

Magnetic recordings comprise all tape forms — audio cassette, video cassette, audio and video reel-to-reel — and "wire" (1940's vintage dictaphone type) recordings. Strong magnetic fields can alter and, in some cases, erase the information on this type of recording. KEEP VACUUM CLEANERS AT LEAST THREE FEET AWAY FROM MAGNETIC RECORDINGS, as a vacuum motor generates an unusually strong magnetic field. Loudspeakers house powerful magnets which can also degrade recorded tapes.

Reel-to-reel tapes should be stored on edge on metal reels in boxes; cassettes should be stored in air-tight, hard plastic cases on edge. All tapes benefit from being played or cycled (fast forward — rewind) once a year.

There are, of course, many special cases and the archivist should not hesitate to contact a specialist if in doubt. Professional audio engineers, mastering engineers and record company librarians are often useful sources of information.





Marketing Archival Information



Getting Your Archives On Track with the Railroad Market

By MARK R. WINTER

Making records available for research is a common goal of most archival repositories. But large volumes of records go unused because researchers, our customers, don't know that they exist. Therefore, one of our objectives should be to expand our customer base by making potential customers aware of the information in our collections and of the services we provide. Acknowledging that every archives is unique, this article provides a foundation for marketing our archives' information resources and services to the railroad research community.

People interested in railroads are an untapped customer base for most archives. These individuals, whose jargon can be as alien to outsiders as archival terminology, are interested in primary and secondary information, ranging from the railroads and their equipment and structures to the areas they served. The information they find may be used to create finely detailed models, incorporated into books or articles, or retained for some future use.

Railroads are service organizations which sell and deliver transportation (1). The railroads and the people who directly or indirectly documented them have generated tons of documentation, some of which reposes in our archival collections.

While the record group and collection concepts are important to archivists, our customers are primarily

concerned with locating information relevant to their needs. The information in which railroad researchers are interested includes documentation on how the railroad conducted its business and operations and its effect on the area.

Archives are traditionally "geared toward assisting researchers doing their own work." (2) Effective and productive customer service is therefore dependent on several conditions, two of which are finding aids and publicity.

Finding aids can be developed using either staff members or knowledgeable volunteers. Because computers are now common in archives, railroad information is an excellent application for computerization.

Since before the turn of the century, numbering schemes have helped railroads keep track of their motive power (e.g., locomotives), rolling stock and maintenance-of-way equipment. However, numbering schemes are dynamic; that is, a railroad may change its numbering scheme when it purchases new equipment, acquires or is acquired by another railroad, or when it purchases, sells or scraps used equipment. Fortunately, due to the size of most railroads, numbering changes are infrequent.

Railroad equipment is relatively easy to identify and describe. Besides being able to tell what a particular piece of equipment is, the railroad's name, herald

or slogan usually appears on its side. Steam locomotives are easily identified by their wheel arrangement, i.e., the total number of pilot wheels, driving wheels and trailing wheels. Freight cars normally have an identifying number and the railroad's name abbreviation or reporting mark on the lower left side of the car and on the car's ends.

It is important to compare the reporting mark with the name or herald. As used equipment is acquired, some railroads may paint their own reporting marks, car numbers and other descriptive information over the previous owner's information, while retaining the previous owner's name or herald. In cases where a railroad acquires another railroad, the new owner may either retain the original reporting mark and car number and paint its own name or herald on the side of the car or not repaint or mark the car at all. In these cases a reference guide is invaluable.

The Official Railway Equipment Register, a quarterly publication for the railroad industry, lists equipment available for interchange among railroads, as well as other information. The Register is very useful when trying to determine ownership or specifications for specific pieces of rolling stock at a particular time.

Archives need to inform railroad researchers of the information and services available to them. Publicizing that information takes two basic forms: brochures

and announcements. To communicate that the archives contains railroad information, a single sheet folded into a tri-fold brochure can suffice. (3) Brief announcements of collections open for research or recently acquired can be sent to various railroading magazines, modeling associations and historical societies, in addition to being promoted in archival publications.

Popular railroad-related magazines include *Model Railroader*, *Railroad Model Craftsman*, *Trains*, *Railfan*, *Mainline Modeler* and the *Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette*. The National Model Railroad Association's monthly *NMRA Bulletin* reaches almost 25,000 association members. In addition, the A. C. Kalmbach Memorial Library, which shares the association's headquarters building in Chattanooga, contains primary and secondary sources of information on America's railroads.

Announcements can also be sent to historical societies dedicated to preserving the history of their specific railroads. For example, the following societies cover railroads which served or are currently serving Tennessee:

Gulf, Mobile & Ohio Historical Society

Illinois Central Historical Society

Louisville & Nashville Historical Society (includes Family Lines; Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis; Seaboard System; and Tennessee Central)

Southern Railway Historical Society (includes Central of Georgia)

East Tennessee & Western North Carolina Railroad Historical Society

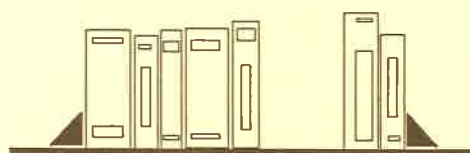
Norfolk and Western Historical Society

The development of finding aids and responding to researchers' requests for information represents a significant allocation of an archives' resources. Therefore, two suggestions are offered here for having our customers share a reasonable portion of the costs for archival services.

The archives' brochures and announcements can contain a statement requesting that researchers send a self-

addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) with their request for information. Most railroad researchers are accustomed to sending SASEs with their information requests. They can also be asked to pay reasonable fees for copies of finding aids, such as a list of all railroad records, or customized finding aids based on key words or phrases provided by the researcher. Depending on the size of the printout, you may wish to include a postage and handling fee.

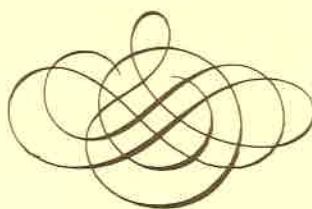
Finally, in today's world, where many archives are caught in seemingly constant budget situations, an assessment of the archives' customer base, in relation to its holdings, may be in order. The results of such an assessment may open windows of opportunity through which existing resources can be better applied to attracting and serving new groups of customers.



From The Bookshelf

Primary Sources and Original Works — A journal devoted entirely to research, documentation and curatorship of primary sources and original works in archives, museums and special library collections. Subscription rates are: \$25 for individuals, \$45 for institutions and libraries. Available from the Haworth Press, Inc., 10 Alice Street, Binghamton, New York, 13904-1580

Conservation of Photographs by George T. Eaton. This book is intended as a reference book for those involved in the conservation of photographs. Cost is \$29.95. Available from the Rochester Institute of Technology, Image Permanence Institute, Frank E. Gannett Memorial Building, P.O. Box 9887, Rochester, New York, 14623-0887.



NOTES

1. Armstrong, John H., The Railroad — What It Is, What It Does: The Introduction to Railroading (Omaha, NE: Simmons-Boardman Publishing Corp., 1978), p. 79.
2. Meissner, Dennis E., "Corporate Records in Noncorporate Archives: A Case Study," Midwestern Archivist, Vol. XV, No. 1, 1990, p. 44.
3. Sanders, Robert L., CRM, "The Saga of the Records Manager and the Renegade Procedures," Records Management Quarterly, July 1990, p. 7.

Archivists

is a quarterly publication of the Tennessee Archivists. Members of the society and others are encouraged to submit brief articles, information on acquisitions, openings, publications, staff, exhibits, special programs and grant projects for inclusion in *Archivists*. The editor appreciates your suggestions and comments about the content and style of *Archivists*. Send materials to: Mancil Johnson, University Archives, Tennessee Technological University, P.O. Box 5066, Cookeville, TN 38505.

—Special—
Marketing Section



Getting Good Publicity

Archivists have traditionally been low-key about seeking publicity. However, in this era of budgetary crisis, it is important that we get the message before the public that historic repositories are important too. We cannot expect the public to speak to their elected officials in our behalf, if we are reluctant to speak for ourselves.

The following suggestions for getting your story before the public, by Paul Neely of The Chattanooga Times, should be of assistance. The Editor's Note immediately following this article contains some more tips and comments, borrowed from a variety of people in the media business.

What?

1. Submit the information in writing, typed if at all possible. Phone calls and handwriting lead to mistakes. If you need more than one page, put the name of the organization and page number at the top of each succeeding page.
2. Put the information in order, most important facts first. Write like a reporter, not like a recording secretary.
3. Answer the basic questions: who, what, where, when and, if appropriate, why and how.
4. Make all facts complete. For instance, if an event is at a school, include the street address. Use day and date; note a.m. or p.m.; state whether an event is open to the public and whether a fee will be charged (if so, how much?). Include courtesy titles for women. (The most common publication style is Susan Smith on first reference, Mrs. Smith or Miss Smith on second reference. It's Mrs. Bob Smith on first reference only if the woman strongly prefers that style. It's Ms. Smith only if the woman prefers that title.)
5. Include the name and phone number of the person to call if there are any questions. An upper corner or the very end of

the press release are the standard places for this item.

Who?

Divisions within a newspaper usually include the city desk (responsible for local news coverage), features (lifestyle, entertainment, food, travel, etc.), sports, photography and the copy desk.

Some newspapers prefer to have all information flowing into one point, usually the city desk. Others prefer that you send each release directly to the most appropriate department or person. A phone call to each newspaper's city desk will provide the answer to each paper's preference. If you have a general mailing, the city desk is usually the best bet.

Use the phone for discussions about the suitability of a special story idea. The city editor or features editor can tell you if your idea for some sort of unusual or feature-story coverage is worth pursuing.

At broadcast stations, most news departments have a person designated as the assignments editor.

When?

Your news will fall into two categories: things that have already happened that deserve to be publicized (receiving an award, awarding a grant) and advances, the public notices of events to come (a fund-raising or community event).

Relatively routine news may be submitted at your discretion, by mail or hand delivery. More timely distribution, however, means more timely publication.

Press conferences may be called when a) your news is so significant to the community that it will bring wide interest, including broadcast coverage, or b) your news is big enough and involved enough that it will be more efficient to present the information and answer questions in one large group.

Daily deadlines affect mostly news that is significant enough to deserve immediate publication. A morning paper normally needs to have information by about 9:00 p.m. to assure publication in all editions. An afternoon paper normally needs information first thing in the morning to assure all editions. Both papers can stretch deadlines under truly unusual circumstances, but it is neither in your interest or in theirs to do so. Information

should be submitted close to deadline only when it is truly breaking news, happening unexpectedly. As a rule, the earlier information is submitted, the better. Times gives a newspaper the chance to be more complete and accurate, to display the story as it deserves to be displayed and to develop further aspects of the story.

Advances of coming events, to inform and invite the public, should be submitted early on. Some weekly calendar features may have a deadline as much as ten days or so before publication.

Early submission gives a newspaper greater opportunity to do more than a routine announcement if the event warrants it.

Unusually large events or fund-raising campaigns may be announced weeks or even months in advance, so that their progress may be followed.

Timing an advance announcement depends on the magnitude of the subject, the schedule, if any, for ticket sales or fund-raising efforts, and the newspaper's deadline requirements. A celebrity benefit night might be announced three months in advance; a more informal event might be announced a month in advance; a weekend event of only limited scope might be in the weekly schedule of events on Thursday before the weekend.

A newspaper's aim is to serve its readers, giving them information in a time frame and prominence relevant to the subject. In the long run, that also serves the subjects and sources of the news.

Photographs

Newspapers have differing standards for what events will be covered or advanced with photographs.

For instance, at the *Chattanooga Times* we generally prefer photos showing action, rather than posed, stand-up shots, and we prefer pictures that will actually help draw a crowd to a community event over those that merely recognize who was at some event. But we also shoot plenty of stand-up shots and we do plenty of recognition shots.

To request a photo assignment, call the city desk of each newspaper. A person on the phone there will take your information and tell you whether your request fits into the newspaper's guidelines.

As with all news submissions, if the request is declined and you're not satisfied with the reasons, ask to speak to the city editor or features editor.

Editor's Note: If you plan to begin sending out releases regularly, it pays to get to know the reporters or editors who will be responsible for publishing your story. If you know that your items will go to the city desk editor, try to schedule a few moments to talk to that individual, to find out what sort of stories he or she wants to publish. Also, now would be an appropriate time to ask for publication guidelines (many papers have them) which will give you information on deadlines and the proper format for submission. After you have asked a few brief questions, thank the editor politely and leave: most editors are extremely busy, and taking up inordinate amounts of their time, either now or in the future, will only annoy them.

You might also consider investing in a copy of the Associated Press Stylebook. This book, which costs around \$14 at most bookstores, lists the rules of writing which are followed by reporters at most U.S. newspapers. By following these guidelines, you can minimize the amount of editing that has to be done to your releases, thus saving the editors time and, in general, building the paper's goodwill towards your organization.

Finally, when writing press releases, try to step outside yourself and be objective about what you are writing about. Is the subject something that will interest the average person, or is it something only people affiliated with your organization will appreciate? If the latter, are there enough members in your organization to represent a significant percentage of the newspaper's audience? These questions are those which the paper's editors will be asking every time they read your releases, and the answers they get will ultimately determine whether your release gets published or thrown in File 13. By keeping these questions in mind, you will save them and yourself much wasted time and effort.



National News



LINCOLN, NE — The Nebraska State Historical Society Archives announces the completion of a series of pamphlets entitled "Stewards of Your Past." Printed on recycled paper, with a space for each repository's stamp, the brochures are a useful tool for soliciting donations of family records, organizational records and company records. A separate brochure addresses the concerns of potential donors. For more information, contact Paul Eisloeffel, Nebraska State Historical Society, P.O. Box 82554, Lincoln, NE, 68501, or call (402) 471-4750.

CHICAGO, IL — The Midwest Archivists Conference announces the 1991 recipients of the prestigious President's Award. The Cleveland Foundation was presented one of the two awards for its long tradition of support to archival programs. The second award was presented to the Curt Teich Foundation for its donation of the Curt Teich Postcard Archives to the Lake County Museum and its significant financial support.

BLOOMINGTON, IN — The Midwest Archivists Conference will meet in their fall meeting at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, from November 7-9. Sessions being planned include "Automation and Reference — The Promised Land" and "Ephemera in the Archives." For further information, contact Sandra Taylor, Curator of Manuscripts, Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, 47405.

SKOWHEGAN, ME — The Margaret Chase Smith Library Center announced the opening of the congressional papers of Congresswoman Smith for research. Congresswoman Smith was long a powerful and controversial figure in Washington. She was elected to fill the vacancy left by her husband's death in 1940 and served until 1972, becoming, along the way, one of the most powerful members of Congress.

ROCHESTER, NY — The University of Rochester and the International Museum of

Photography is sponsoring a five-day symposium entitled "The Transformation of a Medium." The sessions will explore the vast changes in photographic technology that came about during the decade of the 1960s. This symposium is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Rebecca Hurysz, (716) 275-9249.

NASHVILLE, TN — The Southern Archivists Conference announced that the Spring 1992 meeting will be held in Nashville. The meeting will be held May 13-15 at a location to be announced later.

State News



RUGBY — Historic Rugby, Inc., has been awarded a \$46,663 General Operating Support Grant by the Institute of Museum Services in Washington. This year 1,390 museums nationwide applied and 432 were funded. Successful applicants must meet or exceed high standards of museum operation. Historic Rugby has been awarded this highly competitive grant 10 of the past 14 years.

NASHVILLE — The Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention announces a study grant for research on Baptists and the Separation of Church and State, or Baptists and the Peace Movement at the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives. The maximum grant amount is \$1250. The deadline is Feb. 1, 1993.

NASHVILLE — The Fall Meeting of the Tennessee Archivists is planned for November 13-15 at the Tennessee State Library and Archives. In lieu of a preconference workshop, an open forum on Tennessee's manuscripts and historical records will be held.

DUES — David McWhirter would like to remind those members who have not yet paid their dues that there is no time like the present.

NASHVILLE — Nancy Parrot has been appointed to a one-year position as administrator for the NHPRC Needs Assessment Survey for Tennessee.

Any member of Tennessee Archivists wishing to have an item inserted in the state news column, should send it to: Mancil Johnson, Tennessee Technological University, Box 5066, Cookeville, TN 38505.

Invitation

Tennessee Archivists invites membership from all persons interested in Tennessee's archives and historical resources. Membership is on a calendar-year basis. TA holds two meetings each year. The spring meeting includes the annual business meeting and is held in Middle Tennessee. The fall meetings are alternately held in East and West Tennessee. TA publishes a quarterly newsletter and invites contributions from members and non-members. Officers are elected at the spring meeting.

Tennessee Archivists Membership Form

Enclosed is my check for membership in the Tennessee Archivists as a:

Full member (\$10 per year): _____

Association member (\$3 per year): _____

Institutional member (\$10 per year): _____

Renewal? Yes _____ No _____

Name: _____

Institution: _____

Mailing address: _____

Is this your home _____ or business _____ address?

Please make checks payable to Tennessee Archivists and mail to:

David McWhirter

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