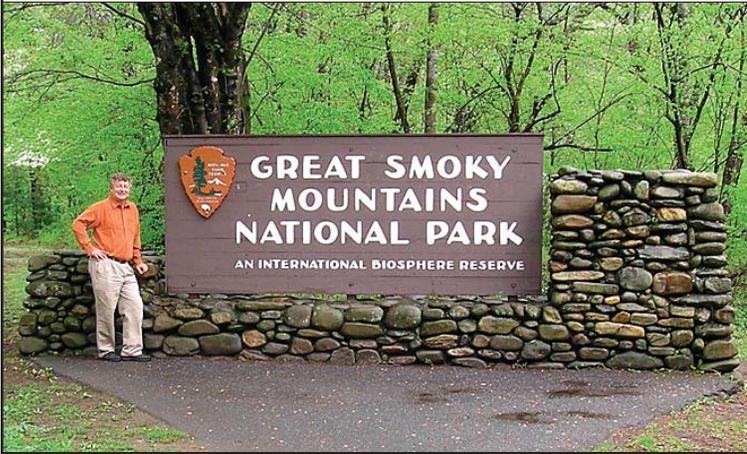




# HFC *on* MEDIA

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*Harpers Ferry Center way-side exhibit planner Rich Helman poses at the east entrance to Great Smoky Mountains National Park. HFC produced a series of new wayside exhibits for the Oconaluftee River Trail which were dedicated on April 21, 2006. See related article on page 5. (Photo by Ron Roos)*

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## From the Editor

*With vision and leadership, Bill Everhart developed this center to foster the interchange of creative ideas and bring to park visitors, through interpretive media, a fuller understanding and appreciation of their natural and cultural heritage.*

– From a placard at the entrance to Harpers Ferry Center

The idea for Harpers Ferry Center dates back to the launch of George Hartzog's tenure as director of the National Park Service. Hartzog became director in January 1964 and one month later named Bill Everhart chief of a new Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services. The new division's job was to bring together the various interpretive functions—audiovisual, publications, museums—and coordinate their activities.

Everhart recalled years later that the newly established division had two essential objectives. "One was to bring in some really professional talents, both to head up and to staff the branches of publications, museums, and AV; the other was to bring all of the people together under one roof."

Today, as in 1970 when Harpers Ferry Center first opened its doors, our professional staff continues to meet the challenges of creating interpretive media that connect visitors to the places and stories of our national parks. The tools of the profession have evolved and changed, but the goal of providing park visitors with a "fuller understanding and appreciation of their natural and cultural heritage" remains the same.



## Remedial Paper Conservation Workshop for Archive Processing

**A week in July 2002 set a precedent for the National Park Service in the arena of preventive conservation. A training workshop, the first of its kind, was held that instructed curators and archivists to perform remedial paper treatments routinely carried out by conservators in a laboratory setting.**

*Editor's note: The workshop described in this article, written by Abby Sue Fisher, Chief, Museum Archives & Historical Services at Keweenaw NHP, is being offered again at Point Reyes National Seashore in August 2006 (see sidebar on Page 3).*

The course, *Remedial Paper Conservation for Archival Collections*, was hosted and organized by Keweenaw NHP (KEWE), with expertise and instruction by paper conservators from Harpers Ferry Center (HFC). A representative from the Technical Information Center at Denver Service Center also participated.

The purpose of the workshop was to help National Park Service curators, archivists, and collection managers deal with large

quantities of oversize paper materials. Instruction focused on media identification, surface cleaning, humidification, and flattening unprocessed paper materials just entering the archive collection that are soiled, rolled or folded. Most important, the workshop concentrated on how to perform procedures that will prolong the life and promote accessibility of these rare one-of-a-kind documents. The prerequisite to participate in the workshop was two or more years working closely with museum and archival collections, and the ability and experience needed to make judgment calls about physically processing materials.

KEWE was established in 1992 to commemorate the heritage of copper mining

*Top: Harpers Ferry Center Paper Conservator Nancy Purinton conducts a humidification chamber demo during the Remedial Paper Conservation Workshop. (Photo by Carola DeRooy)*

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on the Keweenaw Peninsula where one of the country's first and richest mineral rushes occurred. Large mining companies operated on the peninsula between 1856-1969, leaving behind a haunting industrial landscape, and material culture artifacts representing over a century of business practices and life history. The park collaborates with many partners to assist with preservation efforts and ensure visitors to the area have a rich experience.

The park began a museum management program in January 1999, and since that time has acquired 30,427 objects and approximately 309,187 archival items. When a paper conservation survey was done in 2001, the park had recently acquired the Quincy Mine Office building, constructed between 1895-1897. When it was a company property, the building housed administrators, draftsmen, and bookkeepers, and functioned as the company's pay office until the company closed in the 1970s.

Since then the attic and second floor of the building lay dormant for a thirty-two year period with literally all their contents left in place. People had combed through these materials and removed what they perceived as significant; however, the bulk of materials and furniture were left behind. These included a blueprint machine, a photo lab, layout-drafting and tracing tables, bookkeeping desks, boxes of records, scores of blueprints and large format plans, maps, framed prints and artwork. These materials were salvaged, inventoried and re-located to park headquarters. Paper materials alone were calculated at approximately 150 linear feet (or 240,000 items).

Park staff were anxious to learn about cost effective humidification and surface cleaning techniques they could perform to begin their massive effort of archival processing. However, they lacked the

expertise, a dedicated workspace, and the materials needed to clean and flatten large plans. It was recognized that if park staff didn't acquire the skills to perform remedial treatments during processing, valuable archival materials and information would continue to be inaccessible. We also realized it would be cost prohibitive to hire a conservator to treat these collections, since most were in similar condition and prioritizing a hierarchy of preservation need would be impossible.

The need for remedial training was established as a high priority, and funds were allocated to support the workshop. A week for training was set for the following summer, based on the availability of paper conservators Nancy Purinton, senior paper conservator at Harpers Ferry Center, and Theresa Voellinger, assistant paper conservator. Scott Pawlowski from the Technical Information Center at Denver Service Center was also brought on board to share his expertise on reprographics.

The three-day course was advertised and attended by 12 participants—seven curators and archivists from NPS sites all over the country, three KEWE staff, and two people from the park's partner sites. The workshop was divided equally between classroom and hands-on sessions. Classroom sessions included an overview of paper materials and information on exhibits, manuscript collections, architectural drawing collections, reprographics, handling, re-housing, and photographic identification. Most valuable was a session on identifying architectural drawings and reproduction formats. We were taught various ways to distinguish between diazo prints, Vandyke prints, and cyanotypes (or blueprints); how to recognize different papers, inks, and mediums; and the differences between electrostatic copies and photographic processes. The instructors brought and

### **Paper Conservation Training August 21-25, 2006**

On August 21-25, 2006, Point Reyes National Seashore and Harpers Ferry Center are sponsoring advanced training in remedial treatment of paper-based archival materials, including large format blueprints, maps, and plans. "Remedial Paper Conservation for Archival Collections" will focus on media identification, surface cleaning, humidification, and flattening of unprocessed paper collections that are soiled, rolled, and folded. A brief overview of paper materials will include basic information on exhibits, manuscript collections, architectural drawing collections, copy and reproduction processes, handling, rehousing, photograph identification, books, and environment. The training format will include three full days of both classroom and hands-on sessions.

Class size is limited to 15 participants, and is primarily suited for curators, archivists, and collection managers with responsibility for physically processing and cataloguing quantities of paper material, large format plans, blueprints, and drawings. Harpers Ferry Center Paper Conservator Nancy Purinton will be the primary course instructor.

There is no tuition, and a benefiting account will cover travel and per diem. For more information or a training nomination form, please contact course coordinator Carola DeRooy, Archivist at Point Reyes National Seashore (phone: 415-464-5125; email: [Carola\\_DeRooy@nps.gov](mailto:Carola_DeRooy@nps.gov)).

distributed samples so students could actually see and feel the different media.

Students spent an afternoon going over various techniques for surface cleaning dirty and dusty documents. Key to this session was learning there are different levels of “dirty,” and that each document needs to be assessed individually. Health hazards can be associated with dust, mold, and dirt, so safety was discussed and students wore gloves and masks while cleaning. As a group we built two framed screens used for vacuuming fragile documents. When dirt was too stubborn to be lifted through a screen, we learned how to lightly brush dirt into a vacuum nozzle. Other cleaning techniques included using vulcanized rubber dirt erasers and different grades of eraser crumbs.

A valuable hands-on session was learning how to build a cost effective humidification chamber that could be used to safely relax and flatten oversized plans and drawings. We constructed two chambers, one measuring 4 by 6 feet and the other, 4 by 4 feet. Archival double-wall construction blue-gray board was used to construct an open four-sided chamber with 6-inch sides—resembling a large tray. The open box was lined with Mylar, a 4-mil polyester film impervious to water.

The entire humidification system was designed to be safe, adaptable, and inexpensive. The process includes using damp muslin rather than liquid water to provide the moisture in the humidification chamber. Panels of plastic lighting grids are used to separate this humidity source from the drawings. The drawings are laid on spun polyester (Hollytex) while they are being humidified and are gently weighted with Plexiglas tiles as they are slowly unrolled. This method is extremely cost effective since all the materials are reusable. A very important point made during the course regarding humidifica-

tion is that you should only do one drawing at a time. Once humidified, the drawings are pressed between Hollytex and paper blotters, with a large sheet of Plexiglas (30 x 40 inches) to weigh them down. While flattening, the drawings can be stacked so that five or more can be flattened in the same area as they come out of the chamber.

Since the training, staff at KEWE have humidified hundreds of drawings, flattening 10 to 20 a day when the chamber is set up. This is very exciting for us, as most of our collection of oversized drawings came to us tightly rolled. The humidification process has enabled us to see what we have for the first time. We are discovering diazo prints with original markings and notes, providing information not available on other copies. This information augments other archival collections in the area, and is invaluable for resource management relating to historic structures, landscapes, and mining history. Our goal is to make these drawings accessible to staff, researchers, community members, and the visiting public, and to use them for educational and interpretive programming.

It is important for regional and central offices to support this kind of training so that parks with qualified staff can actively manage their own collections. With training like this, parks can make significant progress processing archive collections in a cost effective way. If you are interested in hosting a similar training, workshop curricula and a supply list are available from Abby Sue Fisher ([abby\\_sue\\_fisher@nps.gov](mailto:abby_sue_fisher@nps.gov)) or Nancy Purinton ([nancy\\_purinton@nps.gov](mailto:nancy_purinton@nps.gov)).



*Class participants clean documents during Remedial Paper Conservation Workshop. (Photo by Carola DeRooy)*



okee spellings for various words differ between the tribe's many bands, within individual bands, and even between clans within each band. The wayside team and Cherokee consultants put their trust in Garfield Long, who serves as the official Cherokee linguist for the Eastern Band.

The next challenge was finding a digital typeface that properly represented the complex Cherokee alphabet, and was also compatible with the most common wayside panel imaging technologies. HFC designer Ron Roos ultimately settled on LaserCherokee, a professional PostScript Type 1 font produced by Linguist's Software.

The final porcelain enamel wayside exhibit panels are displayed on unique pedestal style timber bases that the park designed and built. Total cost for planning, design, and fabrication was \$45,000. According to park superintendent Dale Ditmanson, these waysides were "a special project for the park, for our interpreters and educators, and our visitors." They're the first of their kind in the park to so eloquently portray the Cherokee heritage, and demonstrate, says Ditmanson, "the spirit of cooperation that now exists between the park and the Eastern Band" of the Cherokee Nation.

Roos and Helman were pleased to be invited to the April 21 unveiling. But their trip to the Great Smoky Mountains also served another purpose. At the park's request, HFC has begun planning another wayside exhibit project: 20 new waysides along Newfound Gap Road and the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. All these waysides are the product of the "Park-wide Wayside Proposal" that Harpers Ferry Center developed for the Smokies in 1994. This proposal continues to guide a coherent and coordinated approach to wayside exhibit interpretation for the park's roads, trails, and numerous points



of interest. Says Helman, "For more than 10 years, the park has maintained a disciplined multi-phased approach to the planning and development of their wayside exhibits. Even as they dedicate these great new waysides, they're looking three years ahead to their next set of exhibits. That's impressive!"

*The editor gratefully acknowledges Nancy Gray, Public Affairs Officer at Great Smoky Mountains National Park for portions of this article.*

*Top: HFC wayside planner Rich Helman (left) and wayside designer Ron Roos (right) with Cherokee Storyteller Jerry Wolfe. Above: Rich Helman with Great Smoky Mountains National Park interpretive media branch chief Kent Cave along the Oconaluftee River Trail.*

# HFC Publishes New Wayside Exhibit Grids

Wayside exhibit grids are now available from the Harpers Ferry Center website. These grids provide a digital framework for creating wayside production files, are furnished in a variety of sizes, and comply with the NPS UniGuide Sign Program.

Grid Requirements:

- Adobe InDesign CS or CS2 (MacOS or PC-Windows)
- NPS approved OpenType® fonts NPS Rawlinson OT and Adobe Frutiger Std.

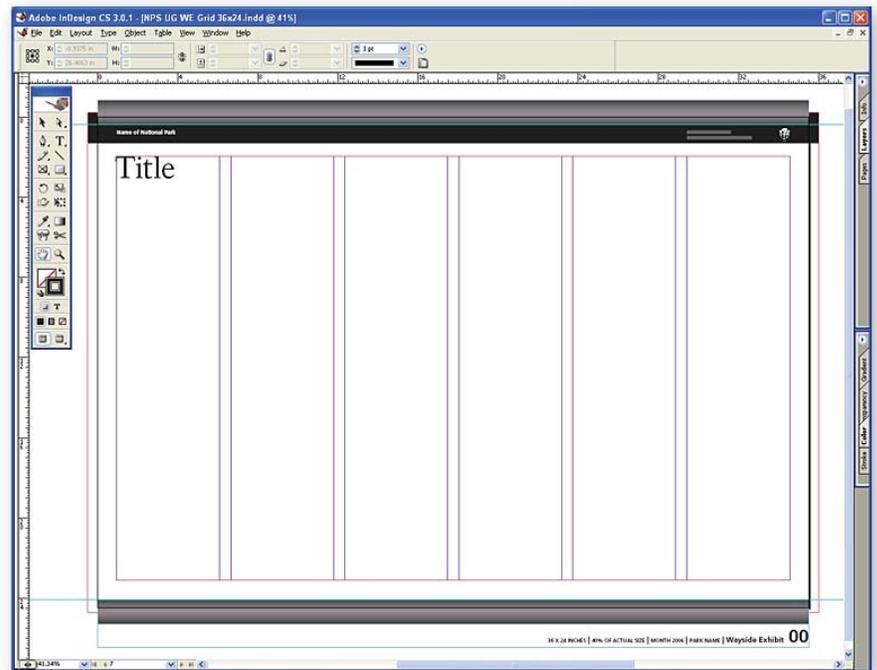
Wayside Exhibit Grids ver. 1.5 include:

- OpenType® paragraph styles for NPS Rawlinson OT and Adobe Frutiger Std. (MacOS and PC-Windows cross-platform compatible)
- Embedded EPS vector arrowhead artwork
- 0.5-inch bleed on right and left margins (0.25-inch on top and bottom)
- removal of “snap to baseline grid” from caption text (still applied to main text and title text)
- “Text” layer to help avoid transparency issues (all text should be created on this layer)
- “Guide” layer to help manage guides
- New 48x24 inch grid
- Auto date feature with the use of the AutoUpdate script (separate download)
- Version information embedded in each grid in the file info metadata (so you will always know what version of the grid you are using)
- “You are Here” InDesign library, which allows you to place formatted “You Are Here” flags directly in InDesign (separate download)

Please remember that all dimensions listed for the grids are nominal only. Actual dimension are still in metric dimensions. For exact dimensions, either select “file info” in InDesign for each

grid or retrieve the “Wayside Exhibit Grids Available, June 2006” pdf file from the HFC website at [www.nps.gov/hfc/products/waysides/way-grids.htm](http://www.nps.gov/hfc/products/waysides/way-grids.htm).

*Below: Screenshot of a 36x24 InDesign wayside exhibit grid and a wayside panel produced for Harpers Ferry NHP based on this grid.*



# New NPS Sign Program Website Launched

*Extensive information about National Park Service sign standards now available*

Harpers Ferry Center is pleased to announce that a new, much more extensive website has been created to provide information about National Park Service sign standards. In addition to providing illustrations and descriptions of various types of signs, the website offers instructions on how to initiate sign orders. The new site is available at [www.hfc.nps.gov/uniguide](http://www.hfc.nps.gov/uniguide).

The NPS Sign Program offers a wide array of sign types: Identity signs (both park and facility); Motorist Guidance signs (including traffic regulatory and parking control); and Visitor Information signs (pedestrian wayfinding, interpretation, resource protection, visitor safety, regulations, and information). Some of these signs (e.g. traffic regulatory markers) can be ordered directly from the Servicewide sign supplier (Bunting Graphics, Inc.).

Other more complicated signs are best purchased by contacting HFC either through

the website or by calling 304 535 5022. Sign Program Manager Bob Clark can explain how the Center can assist parks in developing sign designs and in placing and tracking orders.

To accommodate year-end volume, requests for assistance should be submitted before August 18, 2006.

*Below: Screenshot of the new UniGuide Sign Program website. The website includes information on NPS sign standards, frequently asked questions, resources, and instructions for purchasing a sign or developing a Park Sign Plan.*

[www.hfc.nps.gov/uniguide](http://www.hfc.nps.gov/uniguide)

