

***Caring for the Past, Managing for the Future: Federal Stewardship and America's Historic Legacy. Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). March 2001.***

Since the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, the federal government has been mandated "to be a good steward in managing the historic resources under its administration." A large number of federal agencies are responsible for multiple use public lands, national parks, and military installations. Together, they own thousands of archeological sites, historic structures, and millions of historic artifacts and documents that comprise U.S. history and culture. Lack of leadership and funding, along with conflicting priorities, hinder the agencies' abilities to meet their legislative mandates. In fact, not one federal agency has fully complied with the mandates of the NHPA to fully survey their resources and devise plans to preserve them. This ACHP report is the result of a two-year analysis of how the federal government can improve its care of historic resources. This is the first and most thorough report on the stewardship challenges facing federal agencies entrusted with caring for historical and cultural property on behalf of the American people.

The Advisory Council's findings substantiate the value of placing historic preservation policies under federal stewardship. "Federal historic resources are valuable public assets," the report states, and "much progress has been made by Federal agencies in caring for and preserving these resources over the last 30 years, but chronic problems exist." The problems identified by the Advisory Council stem from inadequate resources, lack of integration of historic preservation into the greater mission of the agency, and the need for improved communication and collaboration with other public and private partners. The Council assessed that only through mobilization of the federal government's full capacities will the vast array of irreplaceable historic resources be secured for future generations:

Leadership

- "The President should direct the highest levels of the Federal Government to make a sustained commitment to history and historic preservation."

Commitment

- "Federal agencies should identify and remove accounting barriers and other administrative impediments within their control to the use and leasing of historic resources in accordance with Sections 110(a)(1) and 111 of NHPA."

Accountability

- "Federal agencies should establish and maintain internal audit programs to monitor compliance with historic preservation laws and regulations and recommend corrective action for critical resource protection needs."

Collaboration

- "The Administration and Congress should work together to establish appropriate mechanisms for Federal agencies and the private sector to promote successful public-private partnerships."

*(Note: The Advisory Council's report on federal stewardship was completed and transmitted to the President and Congress in March 2000. However, we understand that the Advisory Council is planning to make minor revisions to the report and republish it this fall, along with an Executive Order that they have proposed to the White House. The proposed Executive Order would, among other things, direct federal agencies to improve their management of and accountability for historic resources on federal property.)*

Summary

- ◆ Paper version available for purchase (\$3 to cover shipping and handling) via ACHP. Details at <http://www.achp.gov/pubs-stewardshipsum.html>
- ◆ Available ONLINE from ACHP website at <http://www.achp.gov/stewsum.html>

Full Report

- ◆ Paper version available for purchase (\$4 to cover shipping and handling) via ACHP. Details at <http://www.achp.gov/pubs-stewardship.html>
- ◆ Available ONLINE from ACHP website at <http://www.achp.gov/stewardship.pdf>

***Building on the Past, Traveling to the Future: A Preservationist's Guide to the Federal Transportation Enhancement Provision.* Second edition. Edited by Dan Costello and Lisa Schamess. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP). 2001.**

Congress authorized the U.S. Department of Transportation, through the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), to set aside 10% of the Surface Transportation Program funds for Transportation Enhancement (TE) activities. In 1998, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) increased that amount to 12%. State Departments of Transportation have wide discretion to spend these funds and define eligibility for grants that enhance historic preservation. Transportation enhancement activities range from pedestrian paths to preservation of historic railroad stations to scenic beautification, all “in a transportation context.” For example, the Market House Theatre complex in Paducah, Kentucky was restored with Transportation Enhancement funds and spurred a major comeback for the heart of the riverfront town.

This publication offers guidance on the use of Transportation Enhancement funds for historic preservation, including valuable case studies that describe projects, state policies, matching funds, and results. Current factors make the timing of this report quite propitious; TEA-21 is up for reauthorization in 2003. “FHWA guidance,” the publication states, “defines ‘related to surface transportation’ as a relatively flexible standard.” Also, with the growing public interest in historic preservation, transportation and preservation advocates are finding their common ground.

The 12 enhancement activities eligible for funding are listed with project examples, such as archaeological planning and research, acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites, and landscaping and other scenic beautification. The authors also note “increasingly, TE coordinators and advisory committees have broadened the eligibility requirements of their programs to capture a more diverse range of projects with an evident relationship to the transportation system, even if past or present transportation use is not a prominent feature of the project.” The National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse (NTEC), supported by the FHWA and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, provides resources and services, including a list of the latest State TE funding data, State TE program profiles, a database of programmed projects, and contact information and referrals. Many of those documents are available for downloading from the NTEC website (<http://www.enhancements.org>).

Especially useful for those in the initial planning stages, this publication provides procedures, examples, and strong arguments for proposals linking transportation enhancements and historic preservation. The authors give criteria for a strong historic preservation enhancement proposal: public interest, adequate budgetary provisions, involvement of government leaders, planning, and design. This guide provides project proposals of varying size and scope to illustrate the variety of ways TE can be used to enhance preservation. The authors stress partnerships and collaborations, economic benefit, and community enrichment. “Historic preservation knits together the common threads that unite communities in pride and help sustain their economic well-being,” the report attests.

- ◆ Paper version available for pick up at the NTHP Office of Public Policy in DC free of charge or NTHP will mail in packages of 25 or more at cost of shipping.
- ◆ Available ONLINE from NTHP website at [http://www.nthp.org/help/building\\_on\\_the\\_past.pdf](http://www.nthp.org/help/building_on_the_past.pdf)

***Folk Heritage Collections in Crisis.* Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR). May 2001.**

*The compelling recording made by William Rathvone recounting his memory of listening to Abraham Lincoln's address at Gettysburg and reciting the speech as Rathvone remembered hearing it...(the) Norwegian Radio recording of the Nazi officer announcing the takeover of Norway during World War II, assuring citizens that resistance was futile...a record of cowboy songs not widely documented in the literature, and a source of American vernacular music history (Virginia Danielson, "Stating the Obvious: Lessons Learned Attempting Access to Archival Audio Collections," *Folk Heritage Collections in Crisis*).*

The potential loss of a multitude of sound recordings prompted a conference convened by the American Folklore Society and the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, with support from the Council on Library and Information Resources, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The participants ranged from scholars to public and private practitioners engaged with heritage, preservation, and audio-visual material. The risk of deterioration and terminal neglect of documentary sound materials and professional archival audio collections on audiotape, videotape, film, and still photography drove participants to search for solutions to the preservation crisis facing this aspect of America's cultural legacy.

Preservation was the primary concern of the conference, as experts reviewed the now familiar and continuing challenges of media degradation and format obsolescence. Field workers have used a variety of media documentary formats for more than a generation, "each of which has presented new problems of storage, longevity, and hardware dependencies." The conference attendees addressed the other end of the preservation and access continuum, the question of rights management. Therefore, the publication attests, **"it became clear that the only way to find effective answers to the problems of preservation would be to look for innovative ways to simultaneously address the contingent issues of access and rights management."**

Most of the report offers recommendations to address problems of access, preservation, and intellectual property rights. Some of the issues and innovative ways to address them include:

**Access:** Develop an interdisciplinary online portal and regional facilities for local access. This could ensure archive accessibility for the working professional or interested individual and may provide data migration and other resources to archives.

**Preservation:** Develop standards, guidelines and best practices in the field, ensuring that our cultural legacy is preserved in the best manner possible.

**Rights Management:** Develop model contracts, ethical guidelines, and a public domain database of material, to provide a framework from which the disparate parties can continue the dialogue.

One of the most significant achievements of the meeting, according to the document, was "the conversation that began among those whose professional interests are aligned but whose professional lives rarely intersect...Preservation demands tough choices, flexible working methods that allow for rapid integration of new technologies, and scalable approaches...*Everyone who has an interest in the long-term accessibility of heritage materials must embrace responsibility for those materials or the recordings will perish.*"

- ◆ Paper version for purchase (\$15) via the CLIR website at <http://www.clir.org/pubs/abstract/pub96abst.html>
- ◆ Available ONLINE from CLIR website at <http://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub96/contents.html>

***Preserving Our Heritage.* Center for Arts and Culture Issue Brief by Keith Donohue. 2001.**

One in the *Art, Culture & the National Agenda* issue brief series, this publication “provides an overview and analysis of preservation efforts undertaken by the federal government.” *Preserving Our Heritage* is based on a series of preservation publications and background papers from those in the field and addresses federal policies and programs under five major preservation activities:

- Historic Preservation (the built environment, landscapes, sites and monuments)
- Preservation of Artifacts
- Preservation of Documents and Archives
- Preservation of Living Cultural Heritage
- Protection of Cultural Property

A central premise of the paper is the concept of cultural heritage as a “public good,” meaning that the preservation of our shared cultural heritage benefits all Americans. Therefore, the federal government and its agencies share responsibility for that preservation. The specific preservation efforts, strategies, and structures employed by the federal government are reviewed, as they provide the framework for state, local, and private initiatives. Real world examples that illustrate the four modes of preservation (fixing, maintaining, copying, and educating) are elucidated and serve to clarify the recommendations. A sample of the preservation recommendations follows.

Recommendations for federal government initiatives:

- Each federal agency should not only adhere to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its amendments, but also embrace its cultural heritage principles.
- Federal agencies should increase their level of participation in the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and collaborate on a study of best practices.
- The federal government should establish principles governing electronic records and endow a network or consortium of archives for digital preservation.
- Federal funding should be increased for the preservation of national collections and facilities housing them.
- The historic preservation tax credit should be extended to homeowners.
- The U.S. should renew its membership in the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
- U.S. policy should balance the long-term public interest in encouraging international exchange of cultural objects with the need to protect important archaeological sites and ensure that other countries retain objects important to their national heritage.

- ◆ Available ONLINE through the Center For Arts & Culture Preservation web page at <http://www.culturalpolicy.org/pdf/heritage.pdf>

## **Recommended Websites for Preservation Publications**

National Park Service

Cultural Resources Stewardship and Partnership Programs

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/linkpubs.htm>

National Register of Historic Places

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/index.htm>

Dance Heritage Coalition

<http://www.danceheritage.org> - see the Preservation link

National Initiative to Preserve America's Dance

[http://www.danceusa.org/about\\_dusa/nipad.htm](http://www.danceusa.org/about_dusa/nipad.htm)

The J. Paul Getty Trust

The Getty Conservation Institute

<http://www.getty.edu/conservation/>

Council on Library and Information Resources

<http://www.clir.org/pubs/pubs.html>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

<http://upo.unesco.org/>

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

<http://www.achp.gov/pubs.html>

National Trust for Historic Preservation

<http://www.nthp.org/help/index.html?cat=0>

The Smithsonian Institution

<http://www.si.edu/publications/>

The Pew Charitable Trusts

Cultural Policy

<http://www.pewtrusts.com/ideas/index.cfm?page=17&name=Pew%2Dproduced%20Publications&issue=20>

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund

<http://www.rbf.org/publications.html>

Heritage Preservation

<http://www.heritagepreservation.org/PUBS/PUBSINDEX.HTM>

The Center For Arts & Culture

Preservation

<http://www.culturalpolicy.org/issuepages/issuetemplate.cfm?issue=Preservation>

The Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov/>

The National Archives and Records Administration

<http://www.archives.gov>